

O B E D I E N T P A T I E N C E

I N

G E N E R A L ;

A N D

In XX particular Cafes.

W I T H

Helps to obtain and use it ;
and Impatience repressed :

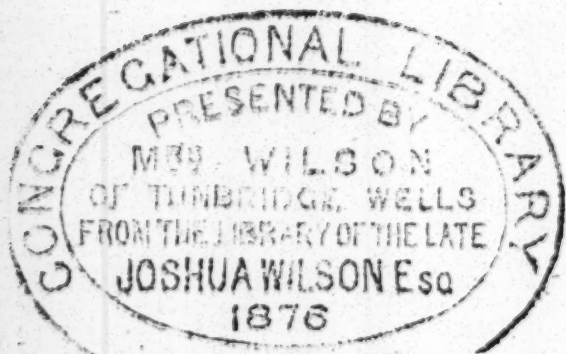
Cross-bearers lefs to be pityed,
than Cross-makers.

Written for his own Ufe, under the
Cross, imposed at once by God and
Man, and Published as now season-
able to many thousands who hold
fast FAITH and CONSCIENCE.

By RICHARD BAXTER.

L O N D O N,

Printed for Robert Gibs, at the Sign of the
Ball in Chancery-Lane, 1683.



THE
PREFACE.

I Here offer to others the same which I have prepared for myself, and find necessary for my daily use. All men most savour that which they find most suitable to them. When I was young and lay under the sad suspicions of my own heart, and the doubts of my sound conversion, and justification, I was far more pleased with a Sermon that opened the nature of saving grace, and

A 2 helpt

The Preface.

helpt me against such doubts,
than with a Sermon of affliction,
and its use; yea tho I began
to be afflicted. But now
this is the subject of my daily
necessary thoughts: Mans
implacable enmity maketh
them somewhat necessary;
but Gods more immediate
corrections on my body, incomparably
more. And while every day almost
fills my ears, with the sad complaints
of weak, Melancholly, afflicted,
impoverished, sick, pained or other-
wise

The Preface.

wise distressed persons, and
and the weekly News-books
tell us of Foreign Wars,
Persecutions, ruines im-
placable contentions, malign-
ant combinations, against
the Church, pursuing Con-
science and obedience to
God, with diabolical rage
to drive it out of the world,
and of the successes of blood
thirsty Men, and the deluge
of Atheism, Idolatry, Sad-
ducisme, Infidellity, Ma-
bometanisme, hypocrisie, sen-
suality, ambition, worldli-
ness,

The Preface.

ness, lying, perjury, malignity, and gross ignorance, which hath even drowned the Earth, while there is little but doleful tidings, complaints and fears from Kingdomes, Churches, Cities, Families, and God in Judgment permitteth mankind to be worse than Serpents, Toads, or Wolves, if not than Devils to one another; and while wit and learning, reverend error and hypocrisie, are every day as hotly at work, as any
Smith.

The Preface.

Smith in his flaming forge,
to blow the coals of bloody
malice; and bating and de-
stroying others, even those
whom they pretend to love
as themselves, seemeth to
multitudes the most honour-
able and necessary work,
and the killing of love, and
of Souls and bodies, is taken
for meritorious of everlast-
ing happiness : I say,
while all this is so in the
world, and while all flesh
must look for pain, sick-
ness and death, and all men
are

The Preface.

*are yet worse to themselves
and greater burdens than
all their Enemies are, I
cannot think a Treatise of
Patience needless or un-
seasonable.*

R. B.

December the
27th. 1682.

The

The CONTENTS.

Chap. 1.

WHat true Patience is, and is not, towards God and Men.
How we possess our Souls in patience?
What Impatience is worst? Wherein lyeth the sinfulness of Impatience towards God. p. 1.

Chap. 2.

Helps for patience in particular Cases. p. 27.

Case 1.

In pains and sicknesses of body: Particular helps. p. 29.

Case 2.

Under the Sentence of death, against inordinate fears. p. 36.

Case 3.

Under poverty and want, through losses, or any other Causes. p. 43.

Case 4.

Under the sufferings and death of friends.

The Contents.

friends. 1. Of Children. 2. Of
ungodly Kindred. 3. Some dear
friend, who dyed in pain or misery.
4. Some Pillars in Church or State.

P. 53.

Case 5.

Unkindness and injury of friends,
and Relatives.

P. 65.

Case 6.

Injuries from malicious Enemies ?
1. Personal, 2. Persecuting.

P. 73.

Case 7.

Oppression and injustice by Men of
wealth and power.

P. 99.

Case 8.

Superiours sufferings by bad Children, Ser-
vants, Tenants, or Subjects.

P. 117.

Case 9.

False accusation, defamation; duty
made odious crimes; reputation rui-
ned.

P. 123.

Case 10.

Vexatious strong Temptations of Sa-
tan, especially to Melancholly per-
sons.

P. 135.

Case

The Contents.

Case 11.

Settled doubts of sincerity and Salvation: Temptations to despair. p. 140.

Case 12.

The loss of Teachers, and suitable means of Grace and Salvation. p. 161.

Case 13.

When God seemeth not to bless means to us; Preaching, Praying, &c.
p. 177.

Case 14.

Weakness of grace, knowledge, faith, love, comfort, great corruptions.
p. 196.

Case 15.

When God doth not bless the labours of our Callings, Ministers, Parents endeavours for Children, for near Relations, Tradesmen, endeavours for the Church. p. 211.

Case 16.

The Common sin and misery of the World, and fewness of wise and Godly men. p. 228.

Case

The Contents.

Case 17.

The sad distempers and divisions of Christians, and the hurt they do to the World, and to one another, and the dishonourable state of the Church,

P. 241.

Case 18.

Heavy Judgments on the Land, by Plagues, poverty, Fire and Wars.

P. 252.

Case 19.

The Prosperity and Triumphs of wicked Enemies of the Church.

P. 263.

Case 20.

No probability in any visible means that ever the World should be much better. Twelve General directions to get and use Patience in every Case.

P. 247.

Obedient

Obedient Patience.

C H A P. I.

What true Patience is, and is not, towards God and Men. Here we possess our Souls in patience? What Impatience is worst? Wherein lyeth the sinfulness of Impatience towards God.

§ 1. **T**O what I have said for Patience from the *Sufferings of Christ*, in another Book for my own use, my condition calleth me to add some more, especially on the consideration of these Texts of Scripture, *Heb. 5. 8, 9. Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered: Luke 21. 19. In your Patience possess your Souls. Heb. 12. 1. to 14. Rom. 5. 3, 4, and 15. 4, 5. Heb. 10. 36. Ye have need of patience that after you have done the will of God, you may inherit the promise,*

B Jam.

Jam. 5. 7, to 12. Jam. 1. 3, 4. *Let patience have its perfect work,* 1 Pet. 2. 19. To the end, and 3. 9. Mat. 5. 10, 11, 12. 1 Pet. 4. 12, to the end, 19. *Let them that suffer according to the Will of God commit the keeping of their Souls to him in well doing, as to a faithful Creator,* Heb. 6. 15.

§ 2. *What is Patience,* 1. *Towards God,* 2. *Towards Man.*

1. Patience considered only Physically; as *meer suffering*, is no virtue or moral good. Devils, and Malefactors, and all Men *must suffer* whether they will or not. 2. Stupidity, or natural dulness is not Patience. 3. Nor to bear the loss of any mercy because we undervalue it, as bad Men can easily bear the loss of Gods grace, and all the means thereto. 4. Nor is it Patience but selfishness, and want of Love, in those that easily bear the loss or sufferings of Friends, (yea and of the Church or Common-wealth) so they be but well themselves, because they much care not for any but themselves. 5. Much less is it Patience desperately to despise and dare Gods Judgments, like Men that are mad or drunk, and take it to be valour to defie the Gallows,

lows. 6. And it is not holy patience when Men restrain their passions only, least they thereby afflict themselves, and not in obedience to God. 7. Nor when it is but the sufficiency of the worldly prosperity which yet is left, which maketh them bear some diminution: He that hath still enough to gratifie his flesh, may bear the loss of that which it can spare, yea though it a little pinch him. 8. Yea if a Man be in greatest want or pain and misery, and bear it quietly only because he hopeth for deliverance in this world, it is but prudent forbearance of of self afflicting, and not the obedient patience of faith. 9. Yea a presumptuous false hope of Heaven it self, and of Gods approbation of some bad cause for which Men suffer, may somewhat alleviate, the sufferings of ungodly Men. Some poor Men and sick Men think that they shall be saved from sufferings hereafter, merely because they have their sufferings in this life; as if affliction without holiness would serve. And many an erroneous person hath suffered the more easily for ill doing, by thinking that it was Martyrdom for the cause of God. *Clement, Ravilliack, Guy Faux,*
B 2
Garnet,

Garnet, many such Murderers, Knipperdolling, and others at Munster, endured much by such presumption.

§ 3. But true Patience is, when both body and mind, having a natural and due sense of the suffering, we yet restrain inordinate passion, (grief, fear and anger,) and their ill effects, especially repining thoughts or words of God, and use no sinful means for our deliverance; but still acknowledge the Sovereignty, Justice, Wisdom, and Love of God, and obediently submit our Wills to Gods, and approve and Love his Holiness and Justice, though we Love not suffering it self, and comfortably hope for a happy issue, even amendment and increase of Holiness here, and Heaven hereafter, where all our sufferings will end in Everlasting joy. This is patience.

§ 4. 2. Patience towards Men, is not
1. Foolishly to take hurt or wrong for none.

2. Nor to be indifferent towards Mens sins, as if they were a small and tollerable evil: Nor to let them alone in the way to Hell, and make our pretence of patience and quietness, an excuse for unbelief, and unmercifulness to Souls; especially when they are publick or com-

mon

mon sin
as Cor
Learni
Church
or by
In this
be use
patien
for the
ful to
to spea
to his
patien
penite

3.

God,
sters,
Corre
for P
or D
dange

4.

that i
fury
heard
neces
and
ange
said

mon sins, which are defended as well as Committed by Men pretending to Learning and piety, endangering the Church or Land, either by their increase, or by exposing us to the Plagues of God: In this Case, (though sober Wisdom must be used) it is sinful cruelty to pretend patience, Charity or Reverence to Men, for the omission of such duty as is needful to Reformation and deliverance: yea to speak easily of heinous sin, as *Eli* did to his Sons, on pretence of gentleness and patience is but to tempt Men to impenitence and damnation.

3. Nor is it *patience* but contempt of God, for Magistrates, Parents and Masters, to forbear necessary Justice and Correction, towards intollerable sin: Or for Pastors to forbear necessary Reproof or Discipline, to the corrupting and endangering of the Church.

4. It is not *just* and *moderate passion* that is sinful Impatience. *Fear* is necessary for self preservation: Christ was heard in the thing that he *feared*; *anger* is necessary to shew our Displacence at sin, and to repel evil: Christ looked with anger on obstinate sinners: And God is said to be *angry every day*, and his *wrath*

doth kindle the flames of Hell. Grief if moderate is but the necessary sense of evil, by which we difference it from good. God made our Passions for our good, and the right use of them is our duty.

5. Lawful and necessary defence of our innocency, our Reputation, our Estates, our Lives, our Liberties, our Country, is not sinful impatience, no more than to defend the Reputation, Estates or Lives of others, whom we must Love but as our selves. Selfish Malefactors, Persecutors, Destroyers, Reproved sinners, are wont to call them *impatient*, who let them not sin, slander, destroy and dominere without contradiction; yea that *praise not* the Plagues of the world and their destroyers. Christ is so accused for his words, of *Herod* and the *Pharisees*.

§ 5. But true Patience towards Men hath all these properties. 1. It maketh not a suffering or a wrong seem greater than indeed it is. Impatience maketh a tollerable pain or injury to seem intollerable: A tooth-ake seems as the breaking of the bones: A Man seems undone if he lose but his House, or his Land, or friend:

friend: A threatning of Men is a frightful thing: Martyrdome is more feared than Hell. To be Imprisoned or Robbed or Persecuted, or falsly accused, to be accounted wicked and guilty, where we are innocent, seem all unsufferable evils to the impatient; which a patient Man maketh not half so great a matter of. To be cast down from honour or preferment; yea to miss of his aspiring hopes, and have another set up before him, is a great and vexatious thing to the ambitious. To have a Mans opinion slighted, contradicted and confuted, his understanding villified, his worth and parts disgraced, his *Will* opposed, yea to be but mockt or scorned, seemeth a very troublesome injury to the proud, which patient Men would easily endure. Much of the wickedness and villainies in the world come from Mens impatient, over-great sensibility of their cross. The Thief ventureth on the Gallows and Hell because he cannot bear his wants: The Fornicator, Drunkard, and all the voluptuous, venture on everlasting misery, because they cannot bear the denying or displeasing of their fleshy appetite, and lust: The great

Tyrants of the Earth , depopulate Countries, raise needless Wars , and fill the world with Hellish wickedness , blood and misery , and their Consciences with the most heynous guilt , because they cannot bear an equal , or a seeming slight or wrong, or to see other Princes greater than they, or to be confined to moderate dominion (though large enough considering their account to God,) Murders are committed by the proud and impatient, because they cannot bear an injury or affront. Yea Sacred Church Tyrants rack and tear Christs Church, by their needless Impositions, and stick not at the cruellest persecutions and ruinings, of Men better than themselves, because they cannot bear that Religion which is not subject to their Wills, or to see any teach the Flocks in any points, against their opinions; or worship God but in their words, or in obedience to their pleasure : Much less to have any that differ from them , to be esteemed and preferred before them. As *Nebuchadnezzar*, *Dan. 3.* by his Idol : They cannot endure any that bow not to their Idol *Will* : A Fiery Furnace seems not too hot for them , they can better bear

bear the most profane and filthy sinner, who hateth Godliness and God, than the wisest and best that will not honour and obey them. The sight of *Mordechai* depriveth *Haman* of all the pleasure of his power and wealth.

2. Patience towards Men doth not blind and pervert our judgments, to think that things and persons are other than indeed they are, or that the cause is worse or better than it is. It leaveth the Judgment impartial, and quiet, and sedate, to right considerations and conclusions. Impatience seldome useth a true Ballance. To a passionate Man or Enemy, all that their Adversaries say or do, doth seem injurious or bad: A Defenter from the Oracle of pride and dominations, seemeth a Fool, or Knave, or a Schismatick, if not unworthy to live as a man, at liberty on the Earth: All the undeniable good that appeareth in them goeth but for Hipocrisie: Yea if God say, that *disobedience* to him is as the sin of *Witchcraft*, and *Rebellion* against him as *Idolatry*, a Papal Spirit dare plead it for it self, as if it were as bad as *Witchcraft* to obey God, before him; and such as he, or as bad as *Idolatry*

not to rebel against Gods Laws , if such Command it. Yea if all others will not joyn with him in the false accusation, and denie Christian Love as much as he ; but will speak for the innocent, and gain-say such unjust aggravations, he is not able to endure their Charity, but accuseth such as defenders of those, whom his pride and impatience hath feigned to be Criminal and intollerable.

3. Patience stops the injuries of Men that they go no further than Man can reach. If Mens scorns and slanders come to our ears, patience stops them from coming to the heart : If Men take away our Estates, patience hinders them from taking away our peace and comfort. If Men lay us in Prison or a Dungeon, patience disableth them to keep out our Heavenly light and consolation. If Men despise us, slight us, cross our Opinions or Wills, patience doth not suffer this to vex us, or cast us into malicious discontent. But impatience openeth the door of the heart, to every cross, or injury, or displeasure. And when Men can but touch our outside or our accidents, impatience doth more, and wounds the Soul. It tormenteth a Man

at the heart , because another hurts his flesh, or less than that, his goods , or name, or some superfluity, which even the flesh might spare.

4. Patience keepeth Men from revenge and all desires of it : It hath no tendency to do hurt. Yea it forgiveth injuries, and desireth God (on his just terms) to forgive them. Yea it is still joyned with a true desire of the good of those that do us wrong, and with just and prudent endeavours of their welfare. *Malchus's* ear is healed by Christ, who prayed for his Enemies , as he taught *Stephen* and all his Followers to do. Its true ; we cannot forgive the sin as it is against God, nor the future punishment ; but we may pray God to give Men Repentance and forgiveness. But impatience is a hurtful and revengeful disposition : It thirsteth after it : It delighteth in it, and rejoiceth to hear of an adversaries sufferings.

5. Patience will keep a Man from seeking his own *defence* and *right*, not only by unjust means, but by means otherwise lawful, when it is like to do more hurt to others, than good to him : If it be like to hurt the Soul of an Enemy,
by

by hindring his conversion to a Christian Life, it is not our defended outward Estate, that will compensate such a hurt and loss. This is the sense of Christs Command, of giving our Garment to him that sueth us at Law, and of turning the other cheek to him that striketh us, *Mat. 5.* That is, patience must submit to tollerable injuries, rather than by impatience to strive by violence and self defence, when it will but exasperate another whose Souls is precious, and whom we must love as our selves, yea we must not fly to the Law or Magistrate to defend a right which we can spare, when patience and submission will do more good to him that wrongs us, or to others, than the vindication of our right will do to us or them. But the meaning is not that *Intollerable injury*, may not be opposed, nor the *Commonwealth* have the preservation of the Law, and that Theives or Murderers be tolerated; nor that all Covetous, Malicious, Oppressing Men should be encouraged to injure others, by knowing that they will never seek their right. Its more for *Order and Common good* than for *our selves* that wrongs must be resisted.

§ 6. By what hath been said, we may understand what it is in *Patience to possess our Souls*. 1. A man loseth himself, or Soul, when he lets in the Enemy or evil into it, that before was but without the doors. His Soul must be Garrisoned with Patience, against sufferings, which are more grievous at the Heart, than in the outward accidents or the Skin: The Spirit of a man, if sound, will bear his outward infirmities, but a wounded Spirit who can bear. Patience in true Believers, and waiting hopefully on God, doth keep the Garrison of the Heart, when the Out-works, our Estates, our Reputation, our Freinds, our Health, are taken from us: For 1. It keeps the Soul against self afflicting. 2. Against temptations to Sin by any unlawful means. 3. Against backsliding by forsaking duty, and not continuing in the use of appointed means. 4. Against sinful doubts, that God forsaketh us, or intends our hurt. It keeps up the peace and comfort of the afflicted, which is our strength. 5. And by all this it helpeth to secure our Salvation. 6. And so far as outward deliverance or ease, or safety is good for us; it is the likeliest way to have it

it, *Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.* Patient enduring and turning the other cheek, doth shame Afflictors, and sooner make them forbear us, than impatient violence and self defence: He that resisteth stirs up the wrath of his Afflicter; when he that blesteth him, and doth him good, and really manifesteth love to him, doth heap coals of fire on his head: He that cannot bear one blow is like to bear two: And he that cannot bear a lesser abuse, shall bear a greater. *Be patient Brethren, and establish your hearts, the Judge is at door, and the coming of the Lord is nigh, Jam. 4. 8, 9.*

But this is not a Rule for Government, nor to whole Kingdomes, as if they must forbear a necessary self-defence against destroying Enemies; but for private men whose self-defence would hurt the Common good.

§ 7. *But is all Impatience equally sinful.* No; here the difference is very great.

1. Impatience towards men is a lesser sin, than against God: Man is a Worm, and may do wrong, and deserve anger and accusation: But against God there is no pretence for this.

2. Impatience

2. Impatience towards Men that *deserve anger*, and which doth exceed only in *degree*, is not so bad, as to be angry without *just cause*. Anger is oft-times a duty, as it is a displeasedness at any evil, and a just repelling of it.

3. Anger which desireth not anothers hurt, further than just Correction is necessary to his or others good, is not so bad as that which tendeth to hurtfulness and revenge.

4. Anger which is short (though too much) and is laid by when it hath done its duty against evil, is not so bad as that which continueth, and is turned into malice and cannot forgive : *Let not the Sun go down upon thy wrath.*

5. Impatience which breaks forth into sinful words (as Cursing, Swearing, Railing, &c.) is far worse than that which doth not.

6. Impatience, which is but such necessitated sense or passion, as is the effect of natural bodily infirmity, is no sin at all farther than sin did bring that Infirmity; as some Children cannot choose but cry : Some Women cannot choose but be afraid at sudden frightening occasions. One may make the stoutest Man some-

sometime to start. Sick people and aged feeble persons, are naturally less patient with matters about them, than strong and healthful Men. Some constitutions, especially of Women, can no more avoid some hurtful fear, grief, trouble of mind and anger, than a Man in an Ague can forbear to shake : Especially Melancholly and Hysterical persons. And God condemns not persons for being tick or weak, Infants or Aged. The will hath but a Political and not a Despotical power over many passions, as it hath over the Tongue and Hand.

7. Impatience which infecteth not the *Judgment* and *Will*, but only consists in *troublesome passion*, is far less sinful than that which doth. When it blindeth and perverteth a Mans Judgment, especially in great points, to think ill of Godliness or Duty, or to accuse God, or distrust his promises, or when it corrupteth the *Will*, and *Love*, and desire, and turneth it from God or any good, this is the damning sort of passion. So that passion of Lust and pleasure, in sensual Youths, in Drunkards, Fornicators, Gamsters turneth their hearts to sin from the Love of Holiness. It becomes deadly,

ly, wi
Judgm
it viti
carried
son to
not f
nor
the v
ment
not
that
if it
pres
bear
can
unn
of
8
cau
wh
pat
ed
bu
R
P
m
cl
fo
P

ly, wickedness when it captivateth the Judgment and the Will. And so when it vitiateth a Mans Conversation, and carrieth him against Conscience and Reason to iniquity. When Hypocrites cannot suffer for Christ and Righteousness, nor endure contempt and poverty in the world, they will force their Judgments to believe that such suffering is not necessary, and that its lawful to do that which will deliver them, much more if it tend to their wealth, honour and preferment. When sensual Men cannot bear a holy sober temperate life, they can make themselves believe that it is unnecessary. This is the damnable sort of impatience.

8. Some excess of impatience in the cause of God, is more excusable than when it is in our own cause. Zeal is a passion, but a great duty: *Phinehas* seemed to have been irregular in his zeal, but his Justice was imputed to him for Righteousness, and on it God stayd the Plague. Had not *Jehu's* zeal been too much for himself, though it seemed cruel, God would have excused it. Christ scourged the Merchants out of the Temple, and the Disciples remembered, the

zeal

zeal of thy House hath eaten me up. God speweth the lukewarm *Laodiceans* out of his mouth. Indeed it is an aggravation of the sin to farther on God a censorious, persecuting, envious, dividing, hurtful zeal: But when it is but some excess of passion or impatience with sin, and maketh a Man, but too eager in doing good, and not to hurt or injure any, the fault is small.

9. There is some passion that may be too much, and yet doth but drive a Man to God and to his duty: Some excess of fear and sorrow may make a Man pray harder, and fly from Temptation, and from sin the more, and live more watchfully and value the mercy of God more thankfully; but there is impatience which quite unsitteth Men for their duty to God and Man: When an impatient froward heart, maketh one unmeet for Prayer, or Meditation, or any holy and comfortable thought of God, and unable to rule their sinful thoughts, and unfit to converse with their Families and Relations with any kindness, fruitfulness or peace, this is a very sinful passion. When an impatient heart doth live in discontent with Gods provision
and

and disposal, and falleth Melancholly by that discontent, and giveth Satan advantage thereby to delude their imaginations, and hurry them into desperate Temptations, and sometimes to go mad, and sometimes to make away themselves, or at least to be unthankful for all Gods mercies, this is a very bad impatience.

10. A passion towards Men about small matters, which is but a sudden displicence (as anger at a provoking word or accident, which soon passeth away) is a small matter if it should be causeless, in comparison of a prophane impatience with Mens duty : When Men cannot bear a plain reproof, nor a searching book or Sermon, nor holy discourse, nor a Godly Life; when they think all too much, or Prayer or Preaching still too long, and can endure many hours more easily at a Play, or in a Tavern, or in Common or vain talk, or worldiy business, than one hour in any Spiritual employment; when they bear more easily with a Swearer, a Jester, an ignorant, carnal, worldly Companion, than with one that seriously discourseth of Death, and Judgment, and the world to come, this is a malignant sort of impatience.

In

In a word, bad Men are incompetent Judges of patience and impatience. They take that Man for a peevish impatient person, who is angry with their sin, and giveth them necessary reproof, or is not as cold as *Eli* to sinful Children or Servants, or is of a quick and eager temper, or sheweth but half that zeal and fervency in holy things, which the nature and weight of the matter doth require: And they will praise that Man as a mild and patient person, who is senseless of the greatest things which should affect him, and will quietly let Men sin and perish, and suffer them to be as bad as they will, and never speak sharply or disgracefully of their sin, nor cross and contradict them in the most dangerous error, much less correct inferiors for doing evil, but be indifferent in every cause of God, and live like a Man asleep or dead, when sin should be resisted, or duty done.

11. That impatience is worst which sets Men upon unlawful means of deliverance: As lying stealing, defrauding, unlawful wayes and Trades of getting, pleasing Men by sin; yea miserable Witches make compacts with the Devil,
and

and some go to real or feigned Conjurers , to obtain their Wills , in their impatience : But that is a less sin, which ventureth on no forbidden remedy.

12. That impatience is the worst, which is justified, and not repented of, when Men say as *Jonah*, *I do well to be angry* ; and that deliberately when the passion should be over. And that is less (and more pardonable) which is confessed and lamented, and which we sincerely pray and watch against, and fain would be delivered from. •

§ 8. *Quest. Wherein lieth the sinfulness of impatience towards God , or under his hand, when Men are his instruments, or permitted by him to afflict us, or in any other tryal which is of God.*

If we see not the evil of it we shall not be diligent to avoid it : Too many take it rather for a suffering than a sin.

Ansiv. 1. Impatience towards God doth signifie answerable *unbelief* : Did we believe his promises that *all shall work together for our good*, and of all the benefit that we may get by patient suffering, it would do much to pacifie the
Soul

Soul. But we are discontented at his usage, because we cannot trust him.

2. Yea this sort of impatience implyeth some degree of Atheism or Blasphemy: For it implyeth some Murmuring against Gods Providence, and that implyeth some accusation of God; and all accusation of God implyeth an answerable degree of Blasphemy; and consequently denyeth God to be God. For if he be blame-worthy in any thing; he is not absolutely perfect: And if he be not perfect, he is not God?

3. Impatience signifieth strong *self-willedness*? When *self-will* is Mens Idol it usurpeth Gods prerogative, and when it should follow his Will by obedient submission, it sets up it self, and *must needs* be fulfilled, and cannot endure to be crost: As if we were Gods, that must have the disposal of all that shall befall us, and nothing must be otherwise than we would have it. Self-will is the great Idol of the world.

4. Impatience signifieth an answerable degree of *over-loving* the *flesh* and *world*; which also is a kind of Idolatry. Were it predominant it were mortal: *For to be carnally minded is death, and if*

if an
love
low
and
from
If w
lives
Etha
Ear
all
an
Ch
liv
Ho
ou
ve
fa
th
o
C
I
if

if any Man (so) love the world , the love of the Father is not in him : Follow any impatience up to its Spring , and you will find that it all cometh from this Carnal Worldly Creature, Love. If we did not over love our ease , our lives , our reputation , our provision and Estates , our Children or Friends , or any Earthly thing , we could patiently bear all our losses of them.

5. Impatience sheweth that we are answerably wanting in our esteem of Christ, and Grace, and Glory, and that we live not as we ought on the hopes of Heaven. If we did, God and our Saviour would be enough for us : Our Heavenly Treasure being safe would more satistie us : Great Men can bear easily the loss of a peny or a pin : The things of the flesh are less in comparison of Christ and Heaven, than a pin is to a Lordship. Sense would do less to trouble us, if we lived by faith.

6. Impatience sheweth that we are too *unthankful* to God for all his mercies. A true Christian never loseth the tenth part so much as he possesseth : When he loseth health, and wealth, and friends, he loseth not his God or Saviour

Saviour, nor his right to everlasting life : Yea when God taketh away one or two of his temporal gifts he leaveth us more than he taketh away. And what unthankfulness is it to forget all that we have received, and possess, and hope for, because that something is taken from us? Yea if God take away our health or wealth at last, should all the years that we unworthily possessed them, be unthankfully forgotten?

7. Impatience sheweth that we are too much *unhumbled* for our sins, and too insensible how ill we deserve of God. He that deserveth the Gallows and is pardoned, should not be impatient of a short Imprisonment, and to pay the Jaylor's fees. Can we believe that our sins, are so many and great as we customarily confess them, and that we deserve Hell fire, and yet impatiently repine at disgrace or injuries from Men, or at the loss of Goods, or health, or friends? This bewrayeth an unhumbled and unmortified Souls (in such a degree) how humble soever Mens words and confessions are.

8. Impatience sheweth that we do not well understand our selves, or the Provi-

Pro
der
ing
wha
or a
got
affl
shou
cure
9
not
to h
on
crea
Cha
of l
fort
and
tha
Rep
and
ste
us
Co
and
for
Glo
wh
lan

Providence of God. We neither understand well our disease, nor the meaning of our Physician : Did we know what a worldly heart is, or a hard heart, or a heart that hath not by Repentance got out the Core of sin, and how useful affliction is to heal all these diseases, we should not be impatient of the sharpest cure.

9. Impatience sheweth that we have not such a Love of Holiness as we ought to have : Else we should think no affliction too dear a means to procure the increase of it : When God tells us that he Chasteneth us to make us partakers of his holiness, and that it may bring forth the quiet fruit of righteousness; and that it may be good for us that we are afflicted, by reducing us by Repentance from our wandring folly, and worldly vanity and deceit : A due esteem of so great a benefit would make us take affliction for a gain. At our true Conversion we do in heart, resolution, and vow, sell all for the precious Pearl, forsake all for Christ, and Grace, and Glory : And should we not forsake that which affliction takes from us, for the same use, if we be really of the mind
 C. that

that we profess. A little Grace is better than all that is taken from us.

10. Impatience, when it is great and tormenting, is a degree of likeness to Hell it self. Hell is a State of Sin tormenting the Sinner (God justly deserting and afflicting such). Their own wickedness continually teareth and vexeth them, and depriveth them of all sense of Gods Love and Mercy, which might ease them. And what a resemblance of this hath the impatient Soul ; which continually vexeth it self with its own *self-wills*, and *fleshy mind*, and *worldly desires*, which are all unsatisfied, and hath no mortification, obedient submission, faith, or hope, to relieve and ease it, but is night and day a self-tormenter.

Such use to say, *we cannot help it : Our thoughts and passions are not in our power : We cannot choose but be continually troubled with discontent, and anger, and grief, and fear.*

11. *Ans.* This sheweth a further evil in your passion, viz. That you are overbrutish, and that Reason it self is dethroned, and hath lost its due government of sense and passion. When a man can give you great and undeniable Reasons enough, against all your discontents, and

and yet they are impotent, and cannot prevail. God gave you reason to bear rule over passion, and he hath furnished you with Arguments, which should easily suffice. If your Reason be enslaved, and faith turned out of doors, and passion rule, whence came this but by your own willful sin? You say, *You are not able to bear what you complain of.* Why, then you shall bear more; God will make you able to bear more whether you will or not, if you cannot obediently bear his tryals.

CHAP. II.

Arguments and Helps for Patient and Obedient Sufferings in particular instances.

HAVING thus far considered of Patience and Impatience in the general, it will be useful to apply some special Remedies to many particular Cases: And first I will name the several Cases, which I mean to speak to: And they are

- I. Gods afflicting hand upon our Flesh, in Pains and Sicknes.

II. The Sentence of Death.

C 2

III. Loss

III. Loss of Goods and Estate, and suffering Poverty and want.

IV. The Sickness and death of Freinds.

V. Unfaithfulness of Freinds.

VI. Persecution by wicked men and Enemies.

VII. Dishonour and loss of reputation, even to scorn.

VIII. The unrighteousness of Rulers, and the wrath of powerful Men.

IX The Treachery, and abuse of Servants, and hearers, and other inferiours.

X. Great and strong Temptations of Satan, &c.

XI. Trouble of Conscience, and doubts of pardon and Salvation.

XII. To lose the preaching of the Gospel, and other ordinary means of Grace.

XIII. When God seemeth to deny our Prayers, and not to bless his Word and Mercies to us,

XIV. When all our duties and lawful endeavours seem frustrated by God.

XV. The great weakness of our Faith, Hope, Love, and other Graces.

XVI. The Misery of the Unconverted World, which lyeth in ignorance and wickedness.

XVII. The great weakness, scandals, and

and divisions of *Christians* : The great and manifold troubles of the Church.

XVIII. The Triumphs of Sin and Wickedness.

XIX. Publick and National sins, plagues, and miseries, especially by war.

XX. The uncertainty of deliverance here, and the fewness of those that shall be saved at last, and the delay of our Salvation. Each of these require some special helps for Patience, besides the Common Helps.

CASE I.

*In Pains and Sickneses of Body :
Particular Helps.*

I. **O**F the First of these I have spoken already in the Meditations on Christs Sufferings, and oft elsewhere. I shall now briefly add,

I. Sinful Souls ! Look back upon the folly, which was the cause of all thy pains. As *Adam* and *Eve* sin brought sufferings into the world, upon our natures, so my own sin is the cause of my own particular suffering. A sinful pleasing of my appetite with raw Apples, Pears, and Plumbs, when I was young,

did lay the foundation of all my uncureable Diseases : And my many offences have since deserved God's Chastisements ! While Conscience so justly accuseth thy self, dare not to mutter discontents and accusations against God. *I will bear the indignation of the Lord because I have sinned against him.* My pain is to me as the distress of Joseph's Brethren was to them, Gen. 42. 21. *We were verily guilty concerning our Brother in that we saw the anguish of his Soul, when he besought us, and we would not bear : Therefore is this distress come upon us,* and Gen. 44. 16. *What shall we say unto my Lord ! What shall we speak, or how shall we clear our selves : God hath found out the iniquity of thy Servants.* So may I say : How oft hath God checkt my vain and wandring imaginations, and carnal thoughts, and I did not sufficiently regard him ; And if God find out my sin, and my sin find out me, why should I blame any but my self and sin ?

2. I can see the necessity of Justice towards others : And why should I not see it towards my self ? What is a Kingdom without it, but a Wilderness of wild beasts, or a Land of Tories ? What is a School without it, but a Masterless House
of

of Rebellious folly? What is a *Family* without it, but a pernicious equalling good and bad. If God made no Laws to Rule Mankind, he were not their moral Governour, but only a cause of Physical motion: If he make no Laws, than there are no Laws in the world but Mans: And then there is no sin against God, and Law-makers themselves are Lawless, and can do nothing for which they need to fear the displeasure of God. But if God have made Laws, and will not by execution correct disobedience, his Laws are contemptible and no Laws, because no Rules of Judgment. And should *I alone* expect to be free from Fatherly Justice, and that my sin should have no correction and rebukes.

3. It is but the same vile flesh that suffers, which must shortly rot and turn to Earth, and if *I* can submit to that, why should *I* not submit to present pain?

4. As sin made its entrance by the *senses* into the Soul, God wisely driveth it out the same way, and maketh the same passage the entrance of repentance. It is *pleasure* that tempteth and destroyeth the sinner. It is *smart* and *sorrow* which contradicteth that deceitful pleasure,

and powerfully undeceiveth brutish sinners. And when Repentance is necessary to pardon and Salvation, and if it be not deep, and true, and effectually, it will not serve: why should *I* be impatient with so suitable a remedy and help, as my bodily pains and weakness are. Had *I* been in this pain when *I* was tempted to any youthful folly, how easily should *I* have resisted the temptations which overcame me.

5. The great *benefit* that *I* have found in *former afflictions*, assureth me that they came from Fatherly Love; yea have been so merciful a work of Providence, as *I* can never be sufficiently thankful for: What have they done but keep me awake, and call me to repentance, and to improve my short and precious time, and to bid me work while it is day? What have they done but keep me from Covetousness, Pride, and Idleness, and tell me where *I* must place all my hope, and how little the world, and all its vanities do signify. And shall *I* think that the same God, who intended me good by all the rest of the afflictions of my life, doth now intend my hurt at last. Experience Condemneth my impatience.

6. As

6. As *Deliverances* have eased many a pain already, and turned all into thankfulness to God, so *Heaven* will quickly end the rest, and turn all into greater thanks and joy. And can I be impatient if I firmly believe so good an end of all?

7. What? did Christ suffer for my sin, and shall I not patiently bear a gentle rod?

8. What do the Bruits that never sinned, endure by Man, and for his sin? They labour, they are beaten, and hurt, and killed for us, and eaten by us? What then do sinners deserve of God?

9. How much sorer punishment in Hell hath God forgiven me, through Christ? And how much sorer must the unpardoned endure for ever? And cannot I bear these rebukes for pardoned sin, when they are intended to prevent far worse?

10. How do I forsake all, and how could I suffer Martyrdom for Christ, if I cannot bear his own Chastizements? Are these sharper than the flames?

11. God hath from my youth been training me up in the School of affliction, and calling on me, and teaching me to prepare for suffering, and am I yet unprepared.

12. Impatience is no remedy, but a great addition to my suffering; both by adding to my sin, and by a foolish vexation of my self. If God afflict my body, shall I therefore foolishly vex my Soul?

Lord all these reasons do convince me of my interest and duty : I am fully satisfied of thy Dominion, wisdom, and perfect goodness, and that all that thou dost is well done, and should not be accused. I am fully satisfied, that I ought with an obedient will to accept of this Chastisement, and not to murmur against thy hand. But the Grace and strength to do this must come all from thee. O strengthen thy Servant that he faint not, nor lay by his faith and hope, or sin against thee.

Quest. But is there no means but such Reasoning with our selves to be used, to help us to obedient patience in our sicknesses and pains ?

Ans. What means but intellectual can be fit to quiet Souls ? Opiate Medicines, that quiet the body, cannot cause the submission of the mind. But 1. Preparitorily, it is of great advantage not to use the body too tenderly in our health : Pamper it not, and use it not with too great indulgence, as to its appetite, ease and

and pleasure. Be as careful of its health as you can, but not of its sensual desires. As they that fondly indulge their Children, and let them have what they would in health, cannot rule them in sickness; so is it with our bodies, use them to temperance and seasonable fasting, and daily labour, and a Dyet and Garb not over pleasant: As *Paul* teacheth *Timothy*, 2 Tim. 2. 3. *Endure hardness as a good Soldier of Jesus Christ*: They that live in sensual pleasure are dead while they live. They that must have sport, and meat, and drink, and ease, because the flesh desireth it, and must take nothing that appetite, or sloth, or fancy is against, do cherish the Flesh in such a state of self-pleasing, as will hardly be brought to patient suffering.

2. Read the sufferings of Christ with due consideration.

3. Read oft the Histories of the Martyrs sufferings.

4. Go oft to the Hospitals or the sick that lie in pain, that you may see what is to be expected.

5. Look on the Graves, and bones, and dust, and you'll perceive, that it is no wonder if such an end must have a painful way.

6. Get

6. Get but deep Repentance for sin, and holy self-displeasure, and revenge will make you consent to Gods Correction.

7. Get but a sense of the danger of prosperity, and bodily delights, and ease, and how many millions are tempted by it, into the broad way of Damnation, and what those poor Souls must suffer for ever, and you will the easier bear your pains; and choose to be *Lazarus* rather than *Dives*, and a *Job* rather than a *Nero*.

8. But there is no effectual cure till *Faith* and *Hope* have such fast apprehensions of the Glory, where all your pains will end, as may Teach you to take them but as Physick for your everlasting health. Therefore Prayer for Grace, depending on Christ, obedience to the Spirit, and a fruitful Heavenly Life, are the true preparations for patient sufferings.

CASE II.

Under the Sentence of Death, against inordinate fears.

II. **T**H E next Case that requireth *Obedient Patience* is the *Sentence of Death*. Of

Of this I have also spoken so oft, that I shall now use but these short remembrances.

1. He that would not die (when he knoweth that there is no other way to Paradiſe) would have no more than he ſhall poſſeſs on Earth : Which he may eaſily know is tranſitory vanity , mixt with ſo much vexation more than moſt of the Bruiſts themſelves have, as would make Man as unhappy a Wight as they , if not much more : And Mans nature which abhorreth death, doth abhor the ending of its being, activity and delights : And will any Mans reaſon then direct him to chooſe ſuch an end of all ? And to deſpair of ever having any life, activity or pleaſure after this ? Doubt-leſs nothing, but Hell is more contrary to our intereſt : And our intereſt if known will be our deſire and choiſe, Who would willingly die as Bruiſts ?

2. If it be ſuch brutiſh unbelief and deſperation which maketh Death fearful, as if there were no better to be had, Reaſon ſhould make ſuch enquiry and ſearch, whether there be no hopes : And if this be but faithfully done, the light of nature and the Goſpel will confute ſuch

such desperation, and give man the joyful prospect of happy immortality. Ist the darkness of ignorance, error and unbelief, that makes us fear that, which should be our joyful hope.

3. But if it be the fear of Hell or future punishment that makes us afraid of death, (as, alas, to most there is greater cause than they will believe) such fears, should drive Men presently to the remedy. We are not in Hell, where there is no hope, but on Earth where mercy is ready to save us, and seeketh to us, and beggeth our acceptance. If you fear death and Hell, fly presently to Christ for grace; Repent unfeignedly of all the sin which is your danger: Give up your Souls to be saved by Christ on his own reasonable terms, and then you may boldly and joyfully hope that he will save them. All your fears, if you will truly repent and trust in Christ, may be turned into assurance of Salvation, and glad desires to be with him.

4. Did we not all our Life time know that we must die? And should a Man therefore live in continual terrour? If not, how little doth the case and reason differ at the last, from that which he was all his life in.

5. All

5. worl
passe
as Bu
kind
much
that
I wi
Case
6
on I
All
way
the
safel
safe
And
firal
ken
7
hat
to
ter
and
the
ma
8
pra
an

5. All that have been born into this world since it was made, have quickly passed out again. Death is as common as Birth. And hath God made all Mankind to live in continual terrour, so much more miserable than the Bruits that know not that they must die? Shall I wish alone to be exempted from the Case of all Mankind.

6. Yea, all the Saints, that ever were on Earth (save *Enoch* and *Elias*) died. All that are in Heaven have gone this way before me. Faith can see beyond the Gulph or Stream, which they are safely waded over, and see them stand safe and joyful on the shore of Glory. And should I not long to be with so desirable Company. But of this I have spoken more elsewhere.

7. Do we beleive in Christ, that he hath done and suffered all that he did, to purchase Heaven for us, and his intercession, and grace is to bring us to it, and when all's done, would we not come there, and had we rather stay in a sinful, malignant, vexatious Earth.

8. Are we in good earnest when we pray, and labour, and suffer for Heaven, and make it the end of all our Religion
and

and Obedience, and make that the business of our lives, and yet would we not go to that which we spend our lives in seeking.

9. If our fears be unreasonable, necessitated by Nature, against the convictions of Faith, even those fears should make us desire death, as that which Faith tells us will end them all, and be our only full deliverance.

10. Is it not unnatural and contrary to the very interest, and tendency of all our faculties, to fear and flee from that which is our own felicity and joy! Doth our Heavenly State differ from the best on Earth, more than a Kingdom from a Prison; and shall we fear it, as if it were evil? and fly from the only hope and happiness of Souls.

Que. These Reasons to Godly men are undeniable, but the fears of death will not yeild to reason: Have you no other way of Remedy against it.

Ans. Souls are wrought upon by Soul-operations and remedies. But further,

1. When Fear cometh from Natural averseness to die, and strangeness to the State of separated Souls, and from some unrevealed

ed.

ed things of the unseen World, its wisdom to cast those dark and unknown frightful things, quite out of our thoughts, and quietly to shut our eyes against them. When *I* was young, *I* was wont to go up the *Wrekin* Hill with great pleasure (being near my dwelling) and to look down on the Country below me, and see the Villages as little things: But when *I* was weak with age and sickness, the last time *I* went up, if *I* did but cast my eye downward my Spirits failed, and *I* was ready to fall down in sudden death. Were *I* chained fast to the top of a high Spire Steeple, *I* am sure that *I* could not fall, and yet *I* am confident, that one look down would suddenly kill me. What then should *I* do? As on the Hill *I* fixt my eyes on the earth at my feet, til *I* came down; so *I* would in such a height, either look only upward, or shut my eyes, and take heed of looking down to the Earth: So do here, If Faith and Reason tell you, that death is not to be so feared, and that all your hope and comfort must be beyond it, and that you are safe in Gods promise, and in the hand of Christ; but yet the thoughts of a Grave, and of Separation from the Body, and of
 all

all thats unknown to us in the next World, is frightful to you, shut your eyes, and think not on those things; wink and say, They belong not to my thoughts.

But then joyn the other remedies.
2. Look upwards, and dwell on the delightful thoughts of all that revealed joy and glory, which is ready to receive us, and of the company that is there, that Hope and desire may conquer Fear.

3. And especially trust Jesus Christ with your departing Souls, and trust him quietly and boldly, as to all that he hath revealed, and you know; and as to all that's unrevealed and unknown; He is fully able, wise, and willing. Trust him for he commandeth it. Trust him, for he never deceiveth any. He hath saved all departed Souls, that ever truly and obediently trusted him. Cast away all distrustful, caring, fearing thoughts, that would take his work out of his hand: Against all such even wink, and trust him: It is his part and not yours to know fully what he will do with you, and to receive you into his prepared Mansions, and to justify you against the accusations of Satan, and the guilt of pardoned Sin; and to bring you into the *Jerusalem* above, and

and p
Cast
who h
mit yo
his ow
chased
will:
Faith,
throug

Und

III.

want
by th
by-re
men
or b
or b
ness
by
debt
or a
ma
ove

and present you spotless to his Father. Cast therefore all these Cares on him, who hath promised to care for you. Commit your selves to him, and trust him with his own which he hath wonderfully purchased : Suspect not his power, skill, or will : And beg his grace to increase your Faith, that you may not fear nor faint through self caring and unbelief.

CASE III.

*Under Poverty and Want, through losses,
or any other Causes.*

III. **A** Nother Case that needeth Obedient Patience is Poverty and want ; either through losses, which come by the afflicting Providence of God, or by robbery , or by oppression of unjust men, by violence or injurious suits at Law, or by the failing of our Trade or Calling, or by multitudes of Children, or by sickness, lameness, and disability to work, or by the unhappiness or miscarriages and debts of Parents, or by rash Suretiship, or any other way.

Poverty hath its temptations, and they may and will be felt, but must not be over-felt. It is some tryal to want food
and

all thats unknown to us in the next World, is frightful to you, shut your eyes, and think not on those things; wink and say, They belong not to my thoughts.

But then joyn the other remedies.
2. Look upwards, and dwell on the delightful thoughts of all that revealed joy and glory, which is ready to receive us, and of the company that is there, that Hope and desire may conquer Fear.

3. And especially trust Jesus Christ with your departing Souls, and trust him quietly and boldly, as to all that he hath revealed, and you know; and as to all that's unrevealed and unknown; He is fully able, wise, and willing. Trust him for he commandeth it. Trust him, for he never deceiveth any. He hath saved all departed Souls, that ever truly and obediently trusted him. Cast away all distrusting, caring, fearing thoughts, that would take his work out of his hand: Against all such even wink, and trust him: It is his part and not yours to know fully what he will do with you, and to receive you into his prepared Mansions, and to justify you against the accusations of Satan, and the guilt of pardoned Sin; and to bring you into the *Jerusalem* above,
and

next
eyes, and present you spotless to his Father.
x and Cast therefore all these Cares on him,
ts. who hath promised to care for you. Com-
edies. mit your selves to him, and trust him with
e de his own which he hath wonderfully pur-
ealed chased : Suspect not his power, skill, or
ceive will : And beg his grace to increase your
that Faith, that you may not fear nor faint
through self caring and unbeleif.

CASE III.

*Under Poverty and Want, through losses,
or any other Causes.*

III. **A** Nother Case that needeth Obe-
dient Patience is Poverty and
want ; either through losses, which come
by the afflicting Providence of God, or
by robbery , or by oppression of unjust
men, by violence or injurious suits at Law,
or by the failing of our Trade or Calling,
or by multitudes of Children, or by sick-
ness, lameness, and disability to work, or
by the unhappiness or miscarriages and
debts of Parents, or by rash Suretiship,
or any other way.

Poverty hath its temptations, and they
may and will be felt, but must not be
over-felt. It is some tryal to want food
and

and necessary cloathing and habitation. Meat
 It is more to be put to beg. it of others, be p
 or be beholden to them, especially who Some
 give it grudgingly : But yet to a single whi
 man these are comparatively smal. Hard by f
 fare and scant, with patch'd or ragged in w
 Garments, may be consistent with health, pare
 when iulness causeth mortal diseases to gain
 the Rich. But it is far harder to bear by r
 the wants of an impatient Wife and cry filth
 ing Children : to have many to provide ed
 for, and to have nothing for them : And the
 it is yet harder to be in debt, and bear
 the importunity, frowns, and threatning an
 of Creditors : what should the poor do in yo
 this distressed case, and how should it be N
 patiently indured ? an

I will first premise this counsel for
 prevention of such necessity and distress,
 and then tell you how to bear it patient-
 ly.

1. Let not your own sin bring you in-
 to Poverty, and then if it be by the try-
 ing Providence of God without your
 guilt, its the more easily born. Some
 run themselves into want by idleness, re-
 fusing diligent labour in their Calling :
 Some come to poverty by base and brut-
 ish sensuality, by pampering the flesh in
 Meats

Meats and Drinks ; their appetites must be pleased till necessity displease them : Some by covetous gaming losing their own, while they gaped after anothers : Some by foolish pride, living above their estates in worldly pomp, in houses, furniture, apparel, and retinue : Some by rash Bargains, and covetous venturousness : Some by rash imprudent marriage : Some by filthy beastly lusts ; and many by unadvised Suretiship : Willfulness and guilt are the sting and shame of Poverty.

2. If you have little, live accordingly, and suit your diet and garb according to your condition, with a contented mind : Nature is content with little ; but pride and appetite are hardly satisfied : Course Diet and Usage are as sweet and safe to a contented mind, as daily feasting to the voluptuous and rich.

3. If your labour will not get you necessities for life and health, beg rather than borrow, when you know you are unable and unlike to pay. Its far easier begging before you are in debt than after : Two such burdens are heavier than one. Such borrowing, if you conceal your disability to pay, is one of the worst sorts of Theiverry, and a great addition to your misery.

4. Draw

4. Draw not others by Suretiship or Partnership, or unfaithful trading into suffering with you. Be not guilty of the sufferings of others : It is more innocent, and more easie to suffer alone.

5. Therefore Marry not till you have a rational probability that you may maintain a Wife and Children : The Case of absolute necessity to the lustful is commonly excepted ; and so it ought when it is but *harder living*, that a Woman is by such a Man put upon, and she knowingly consenteth to the suffering : But I know not how any such Mans necessity can warrant him to make Wife and Children miserable, and that by fraud and without her knowing consent ? Nor do I think, that any Man can be under such necessity, which may not be cured by lawful means : Its a shame that any should need such a remedy ; but I think Christ intimateth a better than such a wrong to others, if no less would serve, *Math. 19. 20. and 18 9.*

I I. But what is to be done for Obedient Patience when Poverty (however) is upon us.

Ans. 1. Find out all your sin that caused it, and repent of that, and see that

that you are much more grieved for that than for your *Poverty* : And presently fly to Christ by faith, till your Conscience have the peace and comfort of forgiveness.

2. Remember that whatever were the means or second causes, Gods Will and Providence is the over-ruling cause, and hath chosen this condition for you, whether it be by way of Tryal (as to *Job* and the Apostles) or by way of punishing Correction. Therefore consider whose hand you are in, and with whom it is that you have to do ; and apply your selves first and principally to God, for Reconciliation, and pardon of the punishment, and for grace to stand in all your Tryals. Behave your selves in all your wants, as a Child to a Father, as if you heard God say, *It is I that do it : It is I that corrects thee, or that tries thee, or that choose thy dyet and Medicine according to thy need, and for thy good.*

3. Think of all those Texts of Scripture, from the Mouth of Christ and his Apostles, which speak of the temptation and dangerouſness of riches, and the difficulty of the Salvation of the rich, and how few such are found Christians or saved;

saved; and how commonly they prove worldly sensual Bruits, and Enemies, and Persecutors of the faithful, *Mat. 19. 23, 24. Jam. 4. and 5.*

And then think of all those Texts that tell you, that Christ himself was poor that he might make many rich; and that the Apostles were poor, and that Christ tryed the Rich Man, whether he were sound, by bidding him *Sell all and give to the poor, and follow him*, and tryeth all his Disciples by taking up the Cross and forsaking all. He shewed what the Spirit of Christianity is when he caused all the first Believers to sell all and to live in Common: And he blesteth his poor, that are poor in Spirit, because that *theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven, Mat. 5.*

4. Study well the great advantages of Poverty, and the particular danger of Riches. The Damnation of Souls cometh from the love of this World and fleshly prosperity and pleasures better than God, and Holiness, and Heaven. And what stronger temptation to this can there be, than to have all fulness and pleasure, which the flesh desireth. Tho it was not for being Rich that *Dives, Luk. 16.* Was damned, nor for being poor

poor that *Lazarus* was saved; yet it was Riches which furnished *Dives* with that pomp and pleasure, which drew his heart from God and Heaven; and Poverty kept *Lazarus* from those Temptations. Doth not reason and experience tell you, that its very much harder for a Man to be weaned from the Love of this world, and to seek first a better, who liveth in all plenty and delight, than a Man that is in continual affliction, and hath nothing in the world to allure him to over-love it? O what a help is it to drive us to look homeward for a better Habitation, and to save us from the deceitful flatteries of the world, and the Lusts of brutish flesh, to be still wearied with one cross or other, and pinched with wants, that even the flesh it self may consent to die, or not be importunate with the Soul to serve it any longer. A Man in miserable poverty is most unexcusable if his heart be not in Heaven.

5. To be overmuch troubled at Poverty is a sin of dangerous signification. It sheweth that you over-love the flesh and the world, and do not sufficiently take God and Heavenly felicity for your

D

Portion

Portion. No Man is much troubled for the want of any thing but that which he loveth: And to overlove the world is a sin, which, if it prevail against the greater Love of God and Glory, is certainly damning. And he that taketh not Gods Kingdom and Righteousness as better than the world, and seeketh it not first, cannot obtain it. If God and Heaven seem not enough for you, unless you be free from bodily want, you trust not God aright.

6. Doth it not properly belong to God, to dyet his Family, and give to every one what he seeth best? If he had made you Worms, or Dogs, or Serpents, you could find no fault with him: May he not diversifie his Creatures as he please? Shall every fly and vermine murmur that he is not a Man: And may he not as freely diversifie the *Provision* of his Creatures, as their *Natures*? Must all be Masters, and yet none be Servants? Must the Rich be bound to relieve the poor, and must there be no poor to be relieved? *The poor you have alwaies with you*, saith Christ: How shall Men be rewarded at last, as they Cloathed them, fed them, visited them, &c. if there were

were none that stood in need thereof? Is not God wiser than we to know what is best for us; and can he not give us all that we desire if he saw it best? And do you think, that he wanteth so much love to his Children as to feed and cloath them? Were it for want of Love, he would not give them the far greater gifts, even his Son, and Spirit, and life everlasting: If this were the Tryal of his Love, you might say that he most loveth the worst of Men, who more abound in Riches than the most cruel and Persecuting Tyrants, the most wicked sensual profligate Monsters: Were Riches any special Treasure, God would not give them to such flagitious Enemies, and deny them to humble faithful persons. Its no small sin to murmur at God for maintaining and governing his Family according to his Wisdom and Will, and for not being ruled by the desires of our flesh.

7. Do you not see that Riches bring more trouble to them that have them than Poverty doth to contented persons. They that have much, have much to do with it, and many to deal with, many Tenants, Servants and others, that will

all put them to some degree of trouble: They have more Law Suits, losses, crosses, and frustrations than the poor. Their food and rest is not so sweet to them, as to poor labouring Men: Their bodies are usually fuller of diseases: Thieves rob them, when he is fearless that hath nothing which other Men desire: He that hath little hath a light burden to carry, and little to care for.

8. And do you think that a Man will die ever the more willingly or comfortably for being rich? No; the more they love the world, the more it teareth their hearts to leave it? O what a horror it is for a guilty miserable Soul to be forced to quit for ever all that he flattered his Soul in as his felicity, and all that for which he neglected and sold his God and his Salvation! No Man till it comes can fully conceive the dismal case of a dying Worldling.

CASE IV.

Under the sufferings and death of friends:

1. *Of Children.* 2. *Of ungodly Kindred.*
3. *Some dear friend, who dyed in pain or misery.* 4. *Some Pillars in Church or State.*

IV. **A** Nother Case which requireth *Obedient Patience* is the sufferings and death of Friends, whether near us, as Wife, Husband, Children, or more remote, as those that have been most kind to us, most faithful to God, or most useful to the Church.

It is not only lawful but a duty, to be duly sensible of such a loss: To be void of natural affection, and to bear all Mens sufferings too easily, saving their own, is the odious quality of the basely selfish.

And alas many good Christians are yet with greater reason grieved, for the death of wicked Children or Relatives, lest they be in helpless misery: And some Parents mourn for their dead Infants as doubting of their Salvation.

Somewhat should be said against impatience in every one of these several cases.

As to the last,

I. Faithful Parents have no just cause to be impatient at the Death of Infants.

For, 1. For my part I think that God hath promised their Salvation: I speak not of the Infants of Heathens or Infidels, or of Hypocrites, but of sincere Christians, (one at least) or such ~~pro~~parents as take them for their own. I believe that it is not another but the same Covenant, which Baptism sealeth to the Child and Parent, and that as true faith is the condition to the Adult, so to be the Child of a true Christian is all, the condition to an Infant, to be dedicated to God and accepted by him; And I beleive that it is the Parents duty to dedicate him, and enter him into Covenant with Christ: And that all that come to Christ are received by him, and none cast out. And that this Covenant on Gods part pardoneth their Original sin, and puts them into an Infant right to Salvation: and that all such so dying are saved by promise. And if any thing hinder actual Baptizing, as long as a Beleiver is justly supposed to devotch himself, and his Child to God, as far as in him lyeth, it is not the

the bare want of water or the outward Ceremony, that depriverh fust of part in Gods Covenant.

All who have chewed some and confirmed others: But if this should serve an
 crutch for the weak, it is more
 dangerous than the Sea. To be
 confirmed is a great mercy:
 but a thinning of the flock is a great
 loss.

And what a dangerous and what a
 abundance of mercy have they have
 undergone, who have been in the
 perils, and dangers of the Sea, of
 many kinds, and have escaped the old
 age? Had it been otherwise, and
 to escape it is no common mercy.
 To be in the harbor is easy, and easily
 while others must be tossed many
 years on so tempestuous and dangerous a
 Sea, is matter of rejoycing. And tho
 confirmed Grace be never lost, such as I,
 who incline to think that the Grace gi-
 ven to the Infants of Beleivers as such, is
 as lofable as *Adams* or the Angels that
 fell was, must with *Augustine* take it
 for a mercy, that their possible apostasie
 is by Death prevented. For my own
 part when I see how many Children of

excellent Men, prove wicked, and scourges to the Church, and what a miserable world it is that we are in, even sunk into darkness, wickedness, and self-destruction, like the Suburbs of Hell, I have many times rejoyced, but never grieved, that I never had a Child. And why then should I mourn, if I had one, and God had quickly taken him away.

II. I confess the death of *ungodly Kindred*, is a humbling case: To think where they are, as Gods Word tells us of all the unconverted and unholy, and to think that they are past all help and hope, remediless for ever. But yet we have all this to command our patient submission to God.

1. God, who is absolute Lord of his Creatures, is wiser and more merciful than we, and doth all well, and to his Glory: And his Will is still fulfilled, which is the end of all: And if we knew what he knoweth, we should rest satisfied in his works, as better than our Will and way would have been.

2. When we come to Heaven we shall be fully reconciled to all the severest Providences of God: For our mind and Will shall be conformed to Gods.

3. We

3. We should rejoyce with the blessed, as well as be sorry for the miserable : And O what worlds of Glorious Angels and Spirits are there for us to rejoyce with, which in proportion should quite over ballance our sorrow for the damned.

4. The destruction of the wicked should call us to think how unspeakably we are beholden to God for our selves, and so many of our friends, and all the faithful, that he did not forsake us, and cut us off in our impenitent state ?

5. What are your kindred, that they should be more lamented than all the rest of the ungodly World ? How incongruous had it been for you to cry and mourn inordinately for the death of some one person, when the Plague lately took away in this City an hundred thousand ? And when the world lyeth in Heathenism, Infidelity, Mahometanism, Popery, Ignorance and Ungodliness, is it congruous for you to be over troubled for one, because he is kin to you ?

III. But suppose the Case be the death of some dear friend of ours ? When we think of the great pain in which they dyed, or of the Grave where now they lie corrupting, or of our former familiar-

rity; our present losses, we are apt to over-grieve. But

1. We alwaies knew that they must die? Do nor as many die as are born.

2. We had a long time to prepare each other for our parting: And doth it now come as an unexpected thing? What else did we live together for, but to help each other to prepare for death?

3. Should we not be thankful to God for the use and comfort of them so long.

4. Is it not matter of greater joy, than our loss should cloud, that they have ended all their work and suffering, and have safely escaped all their Enemies and dangers, and are past all fears and sorrows, and are everlastingly delivered from all the guilt and power of sin, and have the end of all their faith and patience, their work and hope, and are triumphing with Christ and all the blessed in Heavenly endless joy and Glory? Do we believe this, and yet do we not rejoyce with them, but mourn as those that have no such faith or hope?

5. And as to their late pains, it is none when it is past: I would not now wish my self that I had never felt the pain thats past: Much less do they wish it
that

that are with Christ? And yet we are apter to keep imprinted on our minds, the groans and dying sorrows of our friends, than all the former comforts of their lives, or all the joy that they have now with Christ, and shall have for ever.

6. Though natural affection be laudable, usually much faultiness sheweth it self in our overmuch sorrow: 1. It sheweth that we prepared not for it as we ought to do. 2. It sheweth that we have too great a love still for this world and present life. 3. And that our belief of Heaven and the blessedness of the Spirits of the just with Christ, is very weak, and too little effectual. 4. And it sheweth that we expect a longer life on earth our selves, than we have just cause to do. If we knew we should die the next day or week, it would be folly to mourn for our parting from a friend that dyed but the day before. Would we not have their Company. And where can we have it but where we are to be our selves? And are we so sottish as to forget how quickly we must follow them and be gone? If we love their Company, we should rejoyce that we shall quickly

quickly meet them, and live with Christ and them for ever. I have oft thought (and mentioned it) how like it was to this our folly, when I have seen a Man fetch his beasts home out of Pasture, and when one hath gone through the Gate, another hath lookt and mourned after him, not knowing that he was presently to follow. Alas, it is want of conversing by faith with the Saints above, which maketh us over grieve for the miss of them, here below.

And as to the loathsomeness of the Grave and rottenness, it is the fruit of sin, and we alwaies knew that flesh was corruptible. It is made of that which lately stood on our Tables, the flesh of Sheep, and Beasts, and Swine, and Birds, &c. Turned into the flesh of Man: And before that, it was grasse growing for the food of Cattle in the Fields: But the Soul corrupteth not: And if it change the rags of flesh, for a building in the Heavens, why should we repine at this? The Soul is the Man: And God will change these vile bodies, and make them incorruptible, and Spiritual, and immortal, like to the glorious body of Christ. *Phil. 3, 19, 20.*

IV. But

IV. But our sorrows seems to be more justifiable, when we mourn for the loss of the Pillars, or useful Servants of the Church. Their death is the loss of Souls, yea of many, and a sign of Gods displeasure to a Land. But as to this also;

1. Magistrates, and Ministers, and all are mortal: They have their works and time, and then they must go home. They came not to abide on earth, but to do their Message and be gone: When they have faithfully finished their course, they must go to their Masters joy, that he that soweth, and he that reapeth may rejoyce together.

2. Thank God for the Good he hath done by them, and pray for a Succession of more. God will not serve himself here by one Generation only: As the same Rose or other Flowers, which you get this year, will not serve you for the next; nor the same fruit or Crop of Corn, but every year must bring forth its own fruit; so must it be with serviceable men: *Elisha* must have his time and part as *Elias* had; and a *David*, *Solomon*, *Hezekiah*, or *Josiah* live not here alwayes. Every Generation must have its proper Servants, work, and honour. If
some

some have till evening born the burden and heat of the day, allow them their rest, and let others work the following day.

3. And God hath the fulness of the Spirit in Christ, to send forth on Successors : And he is the Lord of the Church, and knoweth whats best, and what the People are fit to receive : Christ lived on Earth to no great age, and he tells his Apostle, *That it was expedient for them, that he go away, that the Comforter might come* : God will choose his own Servants, and their times, and we must submit to his disposal.

4. *Paul* was permitted at *Rome* to dwell two whole years in his own hired house, and receive all that came to him ; preaching the Kingdom of God, and teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ, with all confidence, no man forbidding him. But I have been permitted above forty years to preach the same Gospel, though long a Law, and Bishops, and Justices did forbid me, (save that for nine or ten years, they confin'd my vocal preaching to my house). *James* was cut off near the beginning of his Apostleship. *Steven* was sooner cut off than he

he. Some excellent Ministers hath God taken away young.

5. Christ is more worthy of their company than we are: Heaven is more worthy of them than earth, than those that hate them and abuse them, *Heb. 11. 28. Of whom the World was not worthy.* The world knoweth not the worth of a Saint, nor how to use him, or what use to make of him.

6. We know not from what approaching evil God in mercy taketh them away. We have lately lamented the death of many excellent persons, Magistrates and Ministers: But the Storms that are now assaulting us, tell us, that it was a seasonable and merciful change to them. Christ saith, *Joh. 14. 28. If ye loved me, ye would rejoyce, because I say I go to the father.* They mourn not for their own removal: Would you wish them here again from heaven? You do not mourn, that Christ, and *Abraham*, and *David*, and the Apostles are gone to heaven, nor that *Lazarus* hath changed his beggery for *Abrahams* bosom; nor that the Martyrs are gone thither: The ancient Churches were wont with thankfulness to recite the names of their departed Pastors.

in

in their Liturgies, and to keep dayes of thanksgiving (which we call Holy-dayes) in memorial of their Martyrs. They may say, as Christ, *Weep not for me, but for your selves and your Children* : for those that must indure the storms that are coming upon us, and must be sifted by Satan and his Ministers, to try whether their Faith and Constancy will fail. Christ purchased them for heaven, and he will have them there. It is his Will and prayer, *Joh. 17. 24. Father I will that those whom thou hast given me be with me where I am, that they may see the Glory, which thou hast given me* : (a better sight than we see here, when we are laid among Malefactors in Gaols, or scorned for preaching). *If our hope were in this life only, we were of all men most miserable* : And do we love them so little as to wish them with us in so miserable a life? Is vanity and vexation, and the portion of the wicked, better than the *Jerusalem* above? Our Cows, and Sheep, and Hens, &c. when they have bred up their young ones at great pains and love, must part with them for us to kill and eat, yea, and with their own lives also : And shall we grudge that our Friends and we must die to go where

where God will have us? If God should not take our Friends or us, till our Wills consented, I doubt we should stay here too long, unless pain constrained us to consent: But God is fittest to choose the time. *Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of all his Saints, Psal. 116. Even the hairs of their Head are numbered: It is not then for want of Love to them that they are taken away by death. They rest from their labour and their works follow them? Were we not fools and slow of heart to believe what the Gospel saith of blessed Souls, we should know that they ought to suffer with Christ, and then to reign with him, as he suffered, and then entered into his Glory.*

And, as David said of his Child, we shall come to them, but they shall not return to us.

CASE V.

*Unkindness and injury of friends,
and Relatives.*

V. **A** Nother Case that calls for Patience is the *unkindness of friends, and their injurious dealing with us: Husband and Wife often prove burdens and continual griefs*

griefs to one another. Parents and Children prove worse than strangers: Those that we have obliged by our benefits are ungrateful, and those untrusty whom we have trusted.

1. It must be so: Man will be Man, uncertain and untrusty: *David and Paul* say that all Men are liars; that is, such as will deceive those that too much trust them. They are all sinfully ignorant, erroneous, mutable, and selfish: If interest, change, or Temptations comes there is no hold of them, if God do not hold them up. Did you not know Man till now?

2. It is Gods just rebuke for your too much trust in Man, and for your erroneous overvaluing Man: And it is his merciful remedy to drive you home from Man to God: This deceit and failing of your friends is part of the curse pronounced, *Jer. 17. 5, 6. Cursed be the Man that trusteth in Man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the Lord. For he shall be like the heath in the desert, &c. But blessed is the Man that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is, for he shall be as a Tree planted by the waters, &c.*

3. The

3. The failing of Man doth but tell us what we are our selves, even untrusty and mutable as other Men : It should help to humble us for the badness of our nature, and drive us, to seek to Christ for his confirming grace, and not to trust our selves too far.

4. And it should call us to examine whether we never wronged and deceived others ? Have we not put the best side outward, and seemed better to our friends than we are ? Have we not been less helpful, friendly and comfortable to them, than we promised, or then we should have been ? And deceived their expectations ? Have we not by our failings, or provoking harshness been their grief ? Or worse, have we not pleased them in their sin, and been Temptations and snares to their Souls ?

5. Is there any friend that is nearer to you than your selves ? And is there any that hath hurt you half so much as you have done your selves ? Alas how little suffer we by friends or foes, in comparison of what we suffer by our selves.

6. Christ went before us in this kind of suffering, to teach us what to expect from
Men,

Men, *Peter* denyed him with Curſing and Swearing, and that after warning and contrary proteſtations: And all his Diſciples forſook him and fled. And yet he forſook not them, but dyed for them, and as ſoon as he was Riſen, kindly comforteth them, *Go tell my Bretheren, and tell Peter, ſaith he, I go to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.*

7. Were your friends ſo much obliged to you, as you were to God and to your Saviour; or did they ever promiſe and vow more to you, than you did in your Baptiſm to Chriſt? And have you faithfully performed all your vows, and answered all your obligations. Did you ever oblige any by ſuch benefits as God hath beſtowed upon you? No not by the thouſandth, thouſandth part. And have not you more unthankfully injured God, than ever any friend did injure you? Let this then provoke you to repentance.

8. If it be an unkind Husband or Wife; firſt ſee that you be innocent and give no provocation: If you have deceived them by ſeeming better than you are, or if you be a burden to them, no wonder if they deceive you, and be a bur-

burden to you. And next remember that you had your choice, and that after time of deliberation : If you have by blind love, or passion, or Covetousness, or careless haste, deceived your selves, repent, and make the best of it for the future that you can. Sin will not be without its sting.

9. If you Love God and them, why are you not more grieved that they wrong God, and that they hurt themselves, than that they wrong you and deal unkindly by you. They do a thousand fold more wrong to Christ, and more hurt to their own Souls, than they can do to you.

10. I fear most of us too little consider that friends over kind and so overloved are oft more dangerous than the unkind, yea than Enemies? To be crossed by them may many waies do us good, but to overlove them hath more danger and hurt, than I will now digress to mention: Corrupted Love is the sinfulness and worst affection.

11. And why do you not consider the benefit and comfort, which you have had by your friends, as well as the injuries? What if they now deal unkindly

kindly by you? Have they not many years been kind and useful to you? And should that be forgotten? And if you compare them, was not the kindness longer and greater than the unkindness: If *Job* say, (*shall we receive good at the hands of God and not evil*, we may much more say so of Men.

12. Perhaps God permitteth it, that you may be the less grieved to part with them at death? I have noted it in some of my nearest acquaintance that have lived in the greatest endearedness, that a little before death some unkindness hath fallen out between them, perhaps else death would have torn their hearts more grievously than that unkindness did. When God would separate *Paul* and *Barnabas* for his work, a little dissention became the Cause. And when *Paul* was to be offered up, almost all his old Companions forsook him, 2 *Tim.* 4. 16. Who would have thought that *David* should ever have dealt so unkindly by *Mephibosheth*: But his prosperity was less sweet and less ensnaring by it.

13. It is purposely to keep us from heart Idolatry and drive us to God our surest friend, that he permitteth friends
to

to fail us. It is not them but God that we live upon, and that we must trust to, if we would not be deceived: It is not they but Christ that are our Treasure: God never dealt unkindly with us: He hath promised that he will never fail us, nor forsake us: 2 Tim. 4. 16. When Paul had said, *At my first answer no Man stood with me, but all Men forsook me, (he addeth) yet the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me, &c. Davids Lovers and Friends stood aloof from him, when God was his hope, Psal. 38. 11, 15. and Psal. 14. 4, 5. I looked on my right hand and beheld, but there was no Man that would know me: Refuge failed me; no Man cared for my Soul. I cryed unto thee O Lord, I said, thou art my refuge and my Portion, &c.*

14. I confess that the case of a bad or unsuitable and unkind Husband or Wife, is a very sharp Tryal: They are near you, even in your bosome, bed and heart: They are still with you, and a contentious Woman is as a continual dropping, saith Solomon. To have a discontented, displeased, angry, provoking person alwaies with one to the death, is a greater affliction than any that ordinarily cometh from Enemies. But yet let such consider,

1. That

1. That it is a just chastisement for their sin, and may help to a more deep repentance: 2. As it is a great and constant tryal, so it calleth for great and constant patience, and exercise of Grace: And what is liker to increase grace, than great and constant exercise? 3. It is a great and constant preservative against the flatteries of this world, or building a Palace or Fools-Paradise on Earth; it is a daily voice to such, saying, *this is not your rest; Look up and long for better Company and friends.* 4. And as near as Wife or Husband is, God is much nearer to us, and *his Grace* is nearer us, even within us; and should make us rejoicingly forget all other joyes or sorrows, in comparison of him.

15. The same I say of wicked Children: The affliction is grievous; but 1. It calleth Men to examine how they have done their duty towards them; have you lovingly, familiarly, and unweariedly instructed, exhorted and admonished them? Have you not thrust them into Company, Callings or Places of Temptations, for a little Worldly wealth or Learning or Reputation? Yea have you kept them from Temptations by

by prudent watchfulness and convincing dissuasions? Have you taught them as is required, *Deut. 6. 11*. Or have you not slumbered over so great a duty; and lookt God should save them meerly for being yours.
 2. But remember that all the Children of God in Glory will be dear and comfortable to you, as if they had been all your own.

CASE VI.

Injuries from malicious Enemies?

1. *Personal.* 2. *Persecuting.*

VI. **A** Nother tryal, which requireth Patience, is *injuries from Malicious Enemies. Either Personal Enemies, or such as hate and Persecute us for our Duty.* As to the former sort consider,

1. We have the greater reason to be patient, when we consider what poor and worthless Worms we are; and that enmity and injury against such low and little Creatures is a smaller fault, than if it were against some nobler or exceller Wight. We make no great matter of beating a Horse or Dog. Tho this must not diminish their Repentance, it must diminish our impatience.

2. And we are so bad, that we give oc-

E

casion

caſion of hatred and hard thoughts of us to our Enemies ; and tho this juſtifie not their miſtakes , who take us to be worſe than we are, yet it Commandeth us, who tempt them to it, the more patiently to bear it. They miſtake us moſtly by thinking that the ſame ſins that are in us are predominant, and in a greater meaſure than they are : They call us Erroneous, Proud , Hypocrites , Covetous, Unpeaceable, &c. And when we know that there is in ſome Errour, ſome Pride, Hypocriſie, and the reſt, the Conſcience of this muſt make us the eaſieſt to bear with , and forgive the falſe accuſers , that charge us with more than we are guilty of.

3. And when we conſider we were Enemies to God , and have far more wronged him by ſin than any can wrong us, and yet he forgiveth us ; it muſt teach us to forgive the wrongs and enmity of others : Yea God hath made our forgiving others, a condition of his full forgiving us ; and we cannot pray to him for forgiveness, and conſequently not expect it, on any lower terms, yea we muſt learn of God to Love our Enemies, and pray for them , and do them good, and have no

not to seek revenge and satisfaction.

4. Which of us hath done no wrong to others ? Have we unjustly censured none ? Nor spoken evil of them, or been angry, or reviled them without just cause ? Have we never tempted any to sin, nor encouraged them in it ; nor omitted any duty which we owed them ? If we have we may see Gods Justice permitting injuries against us, as an equal castigation.

5. However Conscience tells us that we have deserved a thousand fold worse from God : And he useth to make the sins of Men, the Instruments of his punishments on Earth : God punished *David* by the permitted sins of *Absalom*, and *Shimei* (tho he caused not the sins.) And *David* the more patiently endured it, as acknowledging the Providence of a correcting God.

6. Its your own fault if all your Enemies wrongs do you not much more good than hurt. God hath told you how so to improve them : And if you do, you may well be patient with that which is your benefit and advantage ; yea and thankful too, which is more than patient. But if you do not so improve them, you have more to be grieved for than their injuries,

injuries, even your own sin and omission, which loseth so gainful an advantage.

7. If they repent, God will forgive them all their greater wrong against him; (O what a deal doth he forgive at once to a converted sinner) and then sure you will easily forgive your mine: But if they repent not, instead of impatience and revenge, pity them and lament their case: For they will suffer more than you can now desire: Would you have them suffer more than Hell?

8. Your happiness and all your great concerns are out of the power of all your Enemies: It is but matters of little moment that they can touch you in. They cannot take away your God, your Saviour, your Comforter, your Glory; no nor the least of your Grace: They cannot deprive you of your knowledge, or of Love to God, of faith, or hope, or peace of Conscience, or Joy in the Holy Ghost: They cannot bring back the guilt of any pardoned sin, nor cast you into Hell?

9. And if impatience open the door of your heart, and let that in, which your Enemies could bring no nearer you than

than your Estate, your Ears, or your flesh at most, it is not they but your selves that are your chief tormenter. And will you torment your selves because another wrongeth you?

10. Do you not observe how sin hath set all the World in a State of Enmity to God, and all that is holy, and to the way of their own Salvation: And that all the un sanctified world is in a War against God and Goodness, under the unknown conduct of the Devil: And do you make a great matter then of some petty injury or enmity to you? This is more foolishly selfish, than if you should complain of a Souldier for taking a pin off your sleeve, when an Army is plundering all the Town, and setting all the Country on fire, and murdering your neighbours before your face.

So much for patience, in case of personal enmity and injury.

II. But if it be in the cause of Persecution for your duty to God, impatience then is far more culpable. In this Case I pre-mise this advice.

1. Search diligently least some personal Crimes of your own be in the cause as well as your Religion: Sometime the

sinful miscarriages of Christians doth provoke the adversaries to think the worse of their way of Religion for their sakes, and so to persecute them for truth and duty, but provoked to it by former sin. In this Case your first duty is to repent of the sin which first provoked them, and openly confess it and lament it : for while you remain impenitent , and hide or justify your gross iniquity , you harden them that afflict you, and you provoke God to let them loose : Especially when you can aggravate all the miscarriages of your persecuters , and cannot bear the naming of your own sin, but take it for enmity or injury to be called to repent.

If it be any sin of ours that have made us stink in the nostrils of our persecuters, we cannot comfortably suffer or expect deliverance, till we repent.

2. Let us search with the severest suspicion and impartiality, that it be indeed truth and duty , and not error and sin, for which we suffer. I doubt not but men may be persecuters and injurious , who do but afflict men for sin and error, when it is done for such as are but those tollerable infirmities, which all Christians in one kind or other are liable to : Or
when

when the punishment is greater than the fault deserveth; and when its done in malice against the piety of the persons, or tends to the hinderance of piety, and injury of the Church of God. But yet the guilt of his Persecuters is no justification of any one that suffereth for his sin or Errour, nor should abate, but increase his Repentance, in that he occasions by his scandal the sin and misery of his Persecuters. *Peter* justly calleth us to make sure, that none of us suffer as evil doers; much less as impenitent persons that cannot endure to hear of it. I am one that have been first in all the storms that have befallen the Ministry these twenty years last, (to look no further back:) And yet my Conscience Commandeth me to say, as I have oft done, that many through mistake, I am perswaded, now suffer as evildoers for a cause that is not good and justifiable. For the great difference among sufferers proveth that some must needs be mistaken.

3. If we be sure that our cause is good, let us also make sure that we use it well: A good cause may be abused: Let us see,
1. That we mixt no errour with it;

2. That we do not manage it partially and uncharitably: That we make not the Contrary worse than it is. 3. That we delight not to represent our adversaries more odiously than there is cause: 4. That we deny no just honour or obedience to our Governours: 5. That we shew not the same Spirit of Persecution which we exclaim against, by differing from them only in the manner of expression: If they unjustly say that *Men are so bad as to be unworthy of liberty, Tolleration, or Estate*, and you as unjustly say that *Men are so bad as to be unworthy of Christian Communion*, you agree in unjust Condemning others, and only wrong them several wayes. 6. Let us see that while we are restrained from some part of our work, we neglect not that which none forbiddeth us. Are we not shamefully guilty in this: None forbiddeth Ministers to Catechize those that are under sixteen years of age, or to teach them by Preaching, or to Pray with them, and yet that is commonly neglected. None forbid us to confer daily with our ignorant or vicious Neighbours to try if we can convert them; nor to win them by kindness, as Christ
went

went to Publicans and Sinners : None forbids Religious people to Catechize, and teach their Families, and read good Books to them, and pray with them, and openly sing the praises of God, as *Daniel* openly prayed in his house, to be examples to ungodly Families about them. And yet how much is this neglected : And a dumb, and negligent Father and Master of a Family will condemn himself by speaking against dumb and negligent Ministers, and against those that restrain him from some publick duties: Some think that if a Law were made (which God prevent) against all Catechising and teaching mens Families, and against praying, and singing the praises of God, it would by opposition stir up some to do it better, that now neglect it, so prone are they to that which is forbidden : And since it is come into the heads of some Clergy-men, to preach openly, that it is unlawful to receive Dissenters to their Communion, and they intend to forbid them and excommunicate them, that they may be incapable of publick trust or votes, I hear that some intend to communicate, who before condemned it as unlawful, and sharply censured those that did it.

But

But when you have made sure, that you suffer not as evil-doers, upon mistake, but for your duty and for righteousness, consider these following reasons for your patience.

1. If you believe not that nothing is done against you by Man, but what falls under the over-ruling disposing will and providence of God, you deny his government, and are unfit to do or suffer: Though God causeth none of the malice, and sin of the Murderers of Christ, yet as to the effect of their free sinful volitions, there was nothing done, but what Gods counsel fore determin'd for the redemption of the world: And if you believe this, dare you impatiently grudge at the Providence of God.

2. Though you are innocent towards your persecuters, and you suffer for well-doing, you are not innocent towards God, who may use bad men for just Chastisement.

3. It is an unspeakable mercy to have unavoidable deserved sufferings, to be made the sanctified means of your salvation, and to be for ever rewarded, for bearing that which else would have been but the foretaste of Hell. Sin brought unavoyd-

unavoidable pain and death on all Mankind. No power, or policy, or price can save you from it. If you deny Christ and sell heaven to save your lives, you shall die for all that; and he that so saveth his life shall lose it, and lose his Soul also by such self-saving: *It is appointed to all men once to die, and after that judgement.* A Martyr doth but die, and so doth his persecuter; and death to the ungodly is the door of Hell. And is it not a marvellous mercy, that suffering but the same death, in faith, and hope, and obedience for Christ, and for your duty, shall procure you a Crown of Glory: Even as the same outward blessings: which to the wicked are but the fuel of Sin and Hell, are by Beleivers improved for Grace and Glory; so is it also with the Case of Suffering: And what a terrour is it to Conscience, when the Sentence of death shall be past upon you, to think. *Now that life is at an end, which I sold my soul to save! O that I had rather chosen to die for my duty, than by my sin; this death would then have been the entrance into heaven, which is now the entrance into misery.* This made many dying Christians in Cyprians charge to be hardly comforted, because

cause they had not dyed Martyrs, that Death might have been a double gain to them. Is it not better have a glorious reward for dying than die for nothing.

4. It is no small benefit to be called out to the exercise of that, which every one must resolve on, and be prepared for, that will be saved: that we may not be deceived, but know by experience, whether we are sincere or not: What ever worldly Hypocrites think, Christ was in good earnest, when he said, *He that forsaketh not all that he hath, even life it self, cannot be his (sincere) Disciple*, Luke 14. 26, 30, 33. Holyness here and Heaven hereafter is that which Christ came to procure for his own, and that which all must choose and trust to as their hope and portion, that will be his: Worldlings never make this choice, but being doubtful of the Life to come, prefer the present prosperity of the flesh, and will be religious onely in subordination thereto, and hope for heaven (if there be any life to come) but as a reserve and second good, because they cannot keep the world; which they will not lose for the hope of heaven, as long as they can keep it, but will rather venture their Souls than

than their bodies : This being the true difference between the faithful and the worldly hypocrite, all that will be saved must be such as would let go life, and all the world, rather than by wilful sin to forfeit their Salvation, if they were called to it; Tho all be not actually put upon the tryal, and seeing it is so easie for a prosperous Man to profess Christianity with a worldly mind, and say that *He would rather die than wilfully sin*, being in hope that he shall never be put to it, it is a great advantage to our assurance of Salvation, to find that we can suffer in a time of tryal, and so that our resolution was not false; for so far as any Man loveth the world, the love of the Father is not in him: The heat of Persecution withereth the Corn that groweth on the Rocks: They are offended and go sorrowful away, because they cannot make sure both of Earth and Heaven. And as the Faithful have the fullest proof of their sincerity in the greatest sufferings, no wonder if they have the greatest comfort: No reasoning will so fully answer all their fears and doubts; whether they are sincere, and should not forsake Christ in suffering.

5. Believers should much more pity their Persecuters than themselves : If a mad Man in *Bedlam* should Spit in your face, would you have your action against him, or would you not be sorry for him? They are preparing fuel for themselves in Hell, while they make a Purgatory for you on Earth : O think who it is that ruleth them, and how he will reward them, and how dear they will pay for this for ever without Conversion ; and pray God to have mercy on them in time. If the Righteous be scarcely saved, and must suffer before they Reign, where shall the ungodly and sinner appear? It is a Righteous thing with God to recompence Tribulation to them that trouble you, and to you that are troubled Rest with Christ, *2 Thes. 1. 6, 7.* Do but believe that dreadful reckoning of their day thats coming, when in vain they will wish the Hills to cover them, and shall receive according to their works, and then you will rather weep over their foreseen misery, than make too great a matter of your suffering by them. They know nothing but present things like beasts, but you fore-know the things to come : As God beareth with

with them, because he knoweth that their day is coming.

6. And remember that if you suffer for Christ and Righteousness, the wrong is much more to him than to you: And he will Judge them that do but neglect his Servants, much more that persecute them, as doing it all against himself: And the cause and interest being much more his than yours, cast it upon him, and trust him with his own cause? Who is to be trusted if he be not? And when is he to be trusted, if not when we suffer for him? An honest Matter would bear out his Servant who suffereth for obeying him, and will not Christ? Do you think that Christ will be too slow, or deal too gently in his revenge? Sure you would wish no greater punishment to Persecuters than he hath threatened. It were better a Millstone were hanged about their neck, and they cast into the Sea, who offend but his little ones? On whom this stone falls it will grind him to powder.

7. The promises made to them that patiently suffer for well doing, are so many and great that I will not recite them, supposing you cannot be ignorant of them.
And

And do you not believe the word of Christ? He hath bound himself to save you harmless, and to be with you in your sufferings, and never to fail you nor forsake you; and to give you for all that you lose for him an hundred fold (in value) in this world, and in the world to come Eternal life: If we trust these promises undoubtedly our patience and choice will shew it: He that is offer'd a Lordship in a Foreign Land, if he will leave his Native Land and friends where he liveth in Poverty or Prison, if he trust the promiser, will leave all and go with him: But if he dare not venture, he doth not trust him.

8. Do you suffer any thing but what Christ foretold you of? Did he not tell you that you must sit down and count what it will cost you to be a Christian before you undertook it? Did he not tell you that you shall be hated of the world, because you are not of the world; yea hated of all (worldly) Men for his Name sake? And did you not profess to take him and his Salvation on these terms? And to consent to his conditions? If you thought them too hard you might have refused them. What Hypocrites are they that silence Christs Ministers

misters for scrupling to engage them in
 Covenant to Christ at their Baptism, by
 the Symbolical transient Image of a
 Cross, as obliging them to be the Sol-
 diers of a Crucified Christ, and when
 they have done, abhor all that in Christi-
 anity which will bring the Cross, and
 will rather venture on Hell than bear it?
 Yea will lay the Cross by Persecution up-
 on others! Its true, that it was in your
 Infancy that this Covenant was made by
 others for you: But did you not own it at
 age, when you called your selves Christi-
 ans? Alas Hypocrisie undoes the visible
 Church: Men mean nothing less than
 what they vow? They think that reso-
 lution for suffering, or Martyrdome is
 proper to some rare extraordinary Saints,
 and will not believe that none is a true
 Christian nor can be saved without it;
 that is, without preferring Heaven be-
 fore Earth, and the Soul before the Bo-
 dy: Take any of these worldly Hypo-
 crites aside, and seriously ask him, (in
France or Flanders) how dare you per-
 secute the Servants of Christ; And they
 will say, it is not long of us, we cannot
 help it; the Law and Magistrates com-
 mand us: We shall suffer our selves if we
 do

do not obey them, would you think that these Men did stand to their Baptism? As if, they plainly said, *what ever Christ saith, we will do any thing against him and his Servants that Mans Law bids us, rather than we will suffer our selves* : How far are these Men from being ready for Martyrdome, yea or being Christians or the Servants of God. If you are Christians you have bound your selves by Covenant to take up the Cross and follow Christ, tho to the death and to chose rather to suffer than wilfully to sin.

9. And did not you as Christians list your selves as Soldiers under Christ, against the Devil, Flesh and World. And is he a Soldier indeed that expecteth to have no Enemies? And that murmur-eth because he must come in danger, and see any Warr? Did you not know that there is a War throughout all the World, between Christ and Satan, between the Womans and Serpents Seed, and is hurting and killing any wonder in a War? Or that he that is born after the flesh should persecute him that is born after the Spirit.

10. What hath a Christian to do in this life, but to prepare for a safe and hap-

happy death? And if you had done this, you had prepared for Persecution and Martyrdome it self. If you are ready to die by sickness, why not by fire, or sword, or halter, if God will have it so? Do you not know that most sicknesses do by their length put the body to more pain than ordinary Martyrdome, before they kill Men? How easie a Death is hanging in comparison of dying by the Stone in the Bladder, or by the Collick, or many other sicknesses? Yea the painful death of burning being soon dispatcht, is little to these. And sure a Fine, or Prison, or Poverty is yet less then any of these. O sloathful Men! unfaithful to your selves that have lived so long unprepared for death, when you had nothing else to do in the World. Your flying from suffering by sin, doth shew that you have neglected the great work of Life, or that that which you lived for is yet undone. You would have been ready to suffer, if you had been ready to die. And doth this seem strange to you, after all your warnings and professions?

II. Have you a due estimate of worldly things? Are you Crucified to the World, and it to you by the Cross of Christ?

Do

Do you account them as loss and dung for him? Do you use them as if you used them not, and possess them as if you possess them not? Do you Judge of them as death will teach you to do? If you do, sure you will not count that Persecution, that taketh them from you, an unsufferable thing; nor be impatient to be deprived of them.

12. Had you rather be in the Case of the prosperous Persecuter, or the Persecuted Believer? If the former, you are no true Christians? If the latter, murmur not when you have that which you prefer? Sure a true Martyr at the Stake, or with *Daniel* in the Lyons Den, would be loth to change states with *Nabuchadnezzar* or *Darius*.

13. Do you think Christ loved *Stephen* the first Martyr, or *James* the first Martyred Apostle, or *Peter* and *Paul* that dyed for the Gospel, less than he loved those that overlived them and suffered no such thing? Is not the Crown of Martyrdome the most glorious? Why are they said to live before the rest a thousand years? Had you not now rather have *Stephens* place in Heaven than theirs that suffered nothing for Christ? And if it be best at last, is it not most Eligible now.

14. Are

14. Are you afraid of Men? You have a greater than Man to fear, and greater hurt than Man can do you, *Luke 12. 4.* *Fear not them that can kill the Body, and after that have no more that they can do, but fear him that can destroy Soul and body in Hell? Yea, I say, unto you fear him.* Are you afraid of a Prison, or death or fire: Fear more Hell fire, and death, everlasting. When *Bilney* burnt his finger in the Candle, he remembered that Hell fire was more intollerable.

15. Wherein hath Christ been more an Example to you, than in patient and obedient suffering, even unto death, and to the most accursed shameful death? Do you think that he only suffered to keep us from all suffering? *Peter* saith, it was to leave us an example; and *Paul* saith that we must be conformed to him, and partakers of his sufferings: Why else doth Christ call us to bear the Cross? And is it not joyful to see the footsteps of Christ in the way we go, and to know that we follow him.

16. Sure that is not a state of greatest fear and sorrows, in which Christ hath Commanded us to rejoyce with the greatest joy: But so he hath done in the Case
of

of Persecution, *Mat. 5. 10, 12. Blessed are they that are persecuted for righteousness sake, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven. Rejoyce and be exceeding glad, for great is your reward in heaven. 1 Pet. 4. 12, 13. Think it not strange concerning the fiery Trial, but rejoyce, in as much as ye are partakers of Christs Sufferings, that when his glory shall be revealed you may be glad also with exceeding joy. Heb. 10, 34. They took joyfully the spoiling of their goods knowing that in heaven they had a better and enduring substance. So Heb. 11. throughout.*

17. God hath promised you that all your sufferings shall work together for your good, *Rom. 8. 28.* and taught you how to make them your exceeding gain: Practice this art, and you will be more patient; when you find the benefit and feel that you are more than Couquerors. Our Victory is by patient suffering: The worst men may conquer our Bodies by force, but our Souls are unconquered, and we are conquerors of the temptation and real hurt, while we keep obedient patience. When its said of *Job, In all this Job sinned no; nor charged God foolishly,* Satan was conquered and missed his end, while he seemed to prevail upon his flesh.

By

By Persecution you may learn.

1. What a nature is in lapsed Men: 2. That there are Devils that keep up a War against Christ. 3. How great their power is in the world, by Gods permission over wicked Men. 4. How wonderful a work of God it is, that the Godly can live in so much peace and safety as they do, among those that are the very Servants of the Devil; even as *Daniel* was kept in the Den of Lyons, because God shut their mouths. 5. How great need there is of Sanctifying grace? 6. How great a mercy our Conversion, which carrieth such a nature in us. 7. It calleth us to continual Christian watchfulness, to *beware of Men*, and especially of their Temptations, and to be wise as Serpents, and innocent as Doves. 8. It driveth us to constant Prayer and dependance upon God for help and safety. 9. It teacheth us to keep up faith and hope, as having our eye continually on God and on the Heavenly inheritance, without which we have nothing to support us. 10. And it assureth us that there is a day of Judgment in which Christ will call over again in Righteousness, all the false Judgments and actions
of

of this world : He that maketh all this use of Persecution , will have gain enough to plead for patience.

18. To review this last ; if you believe in Christ indeed , you do believe that he will come again to Judge the World in Righteousness , and to set all strait that here was made crooked by the falshood and malignity of Men. And will not the foresight of that day resolve you patiently to suffer ? Faith may foresee how poor blinded Persecuters will then have their eyes opened , and see him with terrour whom they Persecuted in his Servants , and how he will silence and condemn them , with , *Depart from me ye Cursed into Everlasting fire , prepared for the Devil and his Angels : Mat. 25. 41. 2 Thes. 1. 6, 10, 11, 12. and 2. 12.* If the forethoughts of that day do not quiet or resolve you , alas , you have greater matter of fear and trouble than Persecution , even your own unbelief : Pray more for faith , than for deliverance from Men.

19. Consider comparatively what Man is that hurteth you , and what God is who hath promised to help you and reward you. Man is a worm , blinded and mad

mad by the deceit of Satan ; They know not what they are doing, against themselves and God ; as well as against you : They are all the while going towards the Grave, and their Souls towards the dreadful bar of God : Their bones and dust are no whit terrible : If God will here have mercy on them, he will make them know, *Who it is that they Persecute, and how hard a work it is bare foot to kick against the pricks*, and make them, as *Paul*, themselves undergo such Persecutions for Christ, as they madly used against others : They will say, as *Paul*, *I was mad against them* : And his case tells you, that if the very Captain of the Persecuters were but Converted, tho by a voice and Miracle from Heaven, the rest instead of taking it for a Conviction, would presently persecute him themselves. But if God let them go on, alas, where will they shortly be : O pray, pray hard for your Persecuters as Christ did, before they are past Prayers and hope in Hell. But are these poor wormes to be much feared ? How oft are we charged ; *not to fear them*, Luk. 12. 4. Mat. 10. 28. *Joh.* 24. 27. *Jer.* 46. 27, 28. *Ezek.* 3. 8, 9. The fearful (that fear Men) are numbered

F

bered with *unbelievers*, and are shut out among the Dogs, if fear prevail against their faith, *Rev.* 22.

And then think what that God is, that hath promised our defence. When infinite *Power*, *Wisdom* and *Love*, is set against a few Wasps and Wormes, shall our fear of them be greater than our trust in him? If it were but an Angel from Heaven that appeared for our defence or encouragement, against a Dog that barked at us, it were a shame to us not to trust him. If God be for us, who shall be against us? Read of *Psal.* 91. and *Rom.* 8. and *Mt.* 6. See *Isa.* 8. 13, 14. and *4J.* 10, 13, 14.

2. Can any thing do you greater good, that can outwardly betall you, than that which both assurcth you of your right to Heaven, and puts you presently in possession of it? And this will be the fruit of Martyrdom. O what a change will that day make? From torment to our Masters joy? From the raging Army of the Devil, to the Heavenly Chore of Saints and Angels? A strong faith would make us long for such a day. As Children of God, and joynt Heirs with Christ if we suffer with him, we shall be glorified

fied with him: And the present suffer-
 ings are not worthy to be compared to
 the Glory, *Rom. 8. 18. 2 Cor. 4. 16.* For
 which cause we faint not; but tho our
 outward Man perish, our inward Man is
 renewed day by day: For our light af-
 fliction which is but for a moment, work-
 eth for us a far more exceeding eternal
 weight of glory, while we look not at
 the things which are seen, but at the
 things which are not seen: For the
 things which are seen are temporal, but
 the things which are not seen are Eter-
 nal. *Wherefore let them that suffer accor-*
ding to the Will of God commit the keeping
of their Souls to him in well doing, as to a
faithful Creator, Pet. 4. 19.

CASE VII.

Oppression and injustice by Men of
wealth and power.

VII. **A** Nother Case that requireth
 Patience is *Oppression by Men of*
Wealth and Power in the World, and in-
 justice of ungodly Governours. Justice
 is so much due to all Mankind, and in-
 justice so odious, that we are ready to
 take it the more heynously when we can-

not have our right. Oppressing Landlords raise their Rents to such a height, that poor Men with the most tiring care and labour, can hardly live. And some Rich Men do think that their Wills must be poor Mens Rule, and that they must deny them nothing that they Command, as if the poor were slaves, that had no property or benefit of the Law. And worst of all, when in too many Nations on Earth, Rulers are unjust, and haters of just and upright Men, and either break all bounds of Law to ruin them, or else turn the Law it self against them, and when they justify the wicked, and Condemn the innocent; yea when Piety, and Honesty, and Conscience are made the most intollerable Crimes, and filthiness and sensuality do pass for works of one that may be trusted; these Cases call for extraordinary Patience, and it is the more grievous because that Magistracy is a special Ordinance of God, and the Image of his supereminance and governing power shineth in it: And to have Satan get possession of it, and turn it against God himself who made it, and make that the Plague and Calamity of Mankind, which was instituted for order, justice

justice and defence, and the upholding of Goodness and suppression of sin, this is a most grievous Case. The same I say of cruel Masters Tyrannizing over their Servants, and wicked Parents oppressing virtue in their Chldrer: Here Patience is of great necessity.

And 1. We must here be very careful to distinguish between true Power and its *abuse*, and not to think evil of power it self because it is abused. And this must be the more carefully studied, because here practically to distinguish is exceeding difficult. For the best things when corrupted are the worst. It is hard to love rain and waters in a deluge, when it drowneth the Country, Men and Beasts? One that had seen the Fire of *London*, or yesterday the burning of *Wapping*, might be tempted to take fire to be more terrible than amiable. If Phyicians killed twenty for one that they cured, Men would grow into a dread or hatred of their profession: And as to Rulers, Judges, and all sorts of Magistrates, the Case is the same. They are Gods Ordinances (in general) and good in themselves, and if well used, would be the great blessing of the World; Gods

ordinary means to protect the innocent encourage the Godly, and bring ungodliness to shame ; To keep rich Men from oppressing the poor, and the unruly multitude from popular rage against their Neighbours , or Superiors ; to keep up equity and Justice , and to frustrate Treachery , Perjury and fraud ; in a word, to be Gods Ministers or Officers for the Common good , and to see his Laws obeyed by the Subjects , being themselves the most zealous in obeying them, and to be a terrour to Blasphemers, Fornicators , Murderers, Thieves, Oppressours and other evil doers , and a praise and defence to them that do well.

There are two Cases which are no better than ruin to Mankind : That is, to have no *Government* , and to have utter *Tyranny*, which designeth the undoing of the Subjects, Souls and Bodies, by forcing them to sin against God to their Damnation (as far as force can do it) or Commonly to die as Martyrs, and which is used to subvert the Government of God, and to set up wickedness and Will, and to destroy the Common well fare.

And there are two Cases which are
such

such as we must submit to : One is the *tollerable injustice*, and *oppression* of *ungodly Rulers*, who will kill, and ruin, and persecute some particular innocent men, but yet are for the common peace and welfare, and do *more good* by their Government than hurt by their abuse : These must be patiently indured, so far as the evil cannot lawfully be remedied. The other sort is the *defective government* of *good Rulers*, who endeavour the common good, and promote Piety, and suppress Sin, but with such mixture of failings as follow their personal imperfections, and with such blots as *David* had in the Case of *Mephibosheth* and *Uriah*, and as *Asa* had that oppressed man of the People, and as *Constantine* had in the case of *Crispus* and *Athanasius*, and as *Theodosius* Senior had in the case of the *Thessalonians*, and as *Theodosius* Junior and *Anastasius* had in the case of the *Eutychians*, and as even our King *Edward* the sixth had about the death of the Duke of *Somerset*, and he about his Brothers death. *Grotius* owneth the old saying, that the names of all good Kings may be written *uno annulo* in one ring : I think that is too hard a censure. But even the best

are men : And as a Physicians faults the
 few, cost the Patient dearer than all their
 Neighbours faults do : So a Princes faults,
 tho he be extraordinary good, may cost
 a Kingdom dearer than the faults of thou-
 sands else. Yet these honest Princes are
 so great blessings to the World, and so
 rare, that it is a happy Nation, that hath
 no worse, and must be very thankful for
 them.

But there is a fifth sort imaginable in
Eutopia, and those men of so perfect wis-
 dom and goodness, as that all their Go-
 vernment is just. Short of Heaven, there
 is little or no hope of this, unless there
 be a golden Age to come, or such a Reign
 of Christ for a thousand years as some de-
 scribe, which is but the reign of wisdom,
 justice, piety, and love. But when God
 hath some great blessing for a Land he
 useth to raise up Rulers better than the
 rest of the Nations have ; and when sin
 provoketh him he removeth them quick-
 ly from an unworthy Land , as he did
Josiah, and our King *Edward* the sixth,
 and *Jovian* in the Roman Empire : yea,
 sometimes a wicked people and Clergy
 prevail against a godly King, as they did
 against *Ludivicus Pius* in *France*.

2. Because

2. Because bad Rulers are a great National Judgment, it calleth a Land to search after and repent of National sins; for it is for such that this Calamity usually cometh: When *Gildas* describeth the horrid wickedness of the *Brittish* Kings, he describeth the great wickedness of the Clergy and people as the deserving cause. And no wonder when in the dayes of *Hezekiah* and *Josiah*, tho the Kings were excellently good, yet the unreformed obstinate Clergy and people so provoked God that he would not spare them, but cast them off into Captivity and ruin. But usually God gratifieth their pernicious desires, and giveth them such bad Kings as they would have, as he did *Saul*, *Jereboam* &c. and permits people to please themselves to death.

3. Take heed that selfishness and error cause you not to judge worse of Governours than they are, and to take just restraint or punishment for oppression, and to think all unjust that is displeasing to you. This error is Common to the selfish, partial sort of Men, that Judge Men and actions by self interest.

4. Take heed least overmuch love to your Estates or Liberties make some injustice. and injuries done you, by Rich Men or Rulers, to seem much greater than they are; and it be your vice that rendereth them unsufferable.

These things being avoided, bear your oppressions with these considerations.

1. God permitteth it for your sin, or for your tryal: Therefore be humbled under it as Gods hand, and bear it obediently till he deliver you.

2. If wealth and power be so lyable to make Men Oppressors, do not you desire them, but thank God for a safer station, and bear that which keeps you from it.

3. The sin of oppression is a far greater evil than the suffering of the oppressed: Therefore rather pity them as miserable, than your selves.

4. Consider how much more many Millions have suffered by Oppressions, than ever you did or are like to do. How many thousands were killed and ruined by *Alexander*? How many thousands by *Julius Caesar*? How many thousands in many *Roman Civil Warrs*,
under

under *Anthony, Marius, Scylla, Sejanus* &c. How many Churches corrupted and Persecuted by *Constantius, Valens, Gensericus, Hunnerichus*; &c. What a Multitude did *Justinian* Murder in *Egypt* in blind zeal for Christ? How few Ages have escaped the guilt of innocent blood? How many thousands did the Popes cause slay in the *Palestine Wars*, and in the *Italian frequent Wars*, and the *Rebellions against the Emperours, Fredericks, Henries*, &c. How many thousand Christians called *Albigensies, Waldensies*, and *Bohemians* did they Murder? How many destroyed in *Piedmont, Rhetia*, and *Germany*? How many thousands Murdered at once in *France*, and oft besides? What dreadful work hath the Inquisition made in *Flanders, Holland, Spain*, and *Italy*? What a dreadful case was *Ireland* in, when two hundred thousand *Protestants* were Murdered, and thousands more stript and utterly undone? *Queen Maries* Bonfires were sharper than we have yet felt; while Satan in all ages filleth the World with Wars and blood, a little tollerable oppression by *Landlords* or inferior *Rulers* should not be over tenderly and impatiently complained.

plained of , by Tenants , Servants or any others.

5. Innocency is a sound and healthful state, and can bear much ? *Peter* bids Servants be patient when they suffer undeservedly ; but its not thanks-worthy to be patient when they are beaten for their faults. Peace of Conscience maketh all sound within ; and then a Man may bear the more easily all that befall him from without : When he can say, it is not for my sins he may comfortably commit his cause to God.

6. Whoever oppresseth you, God will never do you wrong, and it is his hands that your great concerns are in : He will use you with merciful Justice , yea and deliver you from all the oppressions of Men.

He suffereth men of the world to oppress the just, that they may be driven to him by Prayer and Faith, and may be saved from damning worldly love, and God may have the glory of their deliverance. How great a part of the Psalms are written upon the occasion of oppressions, plots, and cruelties of wicked enemies : And what abundance of promises of deliverance from such , are recorded

corded in the sacred Scriptures.

7. Patience and Faith are a thousand times better than money, or liberty, or any thing that oppressors can take from you : Do you but take the advantage of oppression to exercise these, and all is turned to your exceeding gain.

8. In this also nothing befalleth you, but what Christ foretold you of, and taught you in what manner to bear. The prosperity, power, and oppression of the wicked, had almost stumbled *David* himself, till he went into the House of God, and understood their end : They are like Gallants sporting and feasting in a sumptuous house, which is to be blown up or set on fire before the frolick is well ended, and then who will be found among them ? He will think himself happy that can say, *I was none of them* : Yea in Judgment how fain would they as *Pilate*, wash their hand from innocent blood ? And even of omissions, much more of Oppressions, say, *Lord, when saw we thee Hungry, Naked, in Prison, &c.* *Qui patitur vincit.* Christ hath foretold you of all this, and taught you to Love your Enemies, and bless them that curse you, and pray for them that hate and persecute

secute you, and turn the other cheek to him that striketh you, and go two Miles with him that Commandeth you to go one, and give him your Coat that sueth you for another Garment: That is, rather suffer than seek private revenge, yea or seek to right your selves, when it will do more hurt to the Souls of others by scandal or alienation or exasperation, than it will do good.

Righting ones self against injuries, especially of powerful oppressions, will cost one more than patient putting up all will do: As I went along the street a Tory in *Latin* reviled me, and struck me on the head with his staff; I took little notice of him, and went on my way and the hurt was small: I saw another stricken and he stroke again, and it raised a tumult, and he and others were sorely hurt, and went to Law after for reparation.

He that cannot bear one blow, must bear many: And he that cannot bear to be oppressed in his Estate, perhaps may lose his liberty or life: We live in a World of wicked Men; and the wicked will do wickedly: And two Rogues by Perjury may take away the lives of the
most

most innocent and excellent Members of the Common-wealth or City ? And what Conscience make such wretches of a malicious Oath, that use to adorn their Sentences with [*God damn me*] and with direful Oaths ?

Is not your oppression a reproof for your unthankfulness, that God by wonderful restraint, hath saved your lives from perjury and oppression so long ? Is it not a wonder of Providence that perjury hath Murdered no more ? Yea that till Popery made it seem needful to their ends, few in many years did ever suffer by it : Is it not a wonder that the worstiest Men both Lay and Clergy, are not utterly destroyed, as to liberty and life, when two or three Atheists, Infidels, Papists, exasperated villains, may swear them to the Goal or the Gallows almost when they will ? Yea, when even *Walsh* the Papist Priest, out of *Keting* tells you that his Irish men, have in all Ages lived in continual war, and murdering one another on the lightest causes, yet if Irish Papists will come hither out of their own Land, and set up the trade of swearing Men to death, I know no remedy but to die in patience. I know some (the
most

most innocent and worthy Men that I know) who dare not let strangers speak with them, least they should Swear Treason against them: For my own part before my weakness confined me to my Chamber, I long confined my self to my House, and refused to speak with unknown persons (to my grief forced to reject the presence of Foreigners that came in want on begging) least they should be Men that would Swear me to the Gallows, if they could but say that once they speak with me or saw me: **And** as the world now goeth if we escape with our Lives by such avoiding human converse with unknown persons (as we fly from Wolves and Serpents) we shall esteem it a very great protection by the Providence of the all Ruling God. I doubt not but (while I am sharply accused by some for coming too near the Papists and Conformists,) there are no small number of them, whose Faces I never saw, nor ever had any thing to do with, who would confidently swear some Capital Crime against me, had they but the least advantage of Speech or Presence, to make it seem but a possible thing, only because I am accounted an Adversary to
their

their side and Opinion in Religion.

And why should all this seem strange or intollerable to us ? When Christ doth so often tell us, that Rich Men are usually the worst, and that he sent out his Apostles as Lambs among Wolves ? And when we know how Christ, and his Apostles were used by the Rulers and Teachers, of the People ; yea and Christians after them in most ages to this day.

9. Consider how great the Temptations are, of Men that are in power, wealth and pleasure ; and then you will pity them and pray for them : Who knoweth what you would have done your selves if you had their Temptations ? They have a stronger worldly interest to tempt them against that Law of Christ, which calls them another way, than other Men have. They have more full and constant provision for all the desires of the flesh : They are more than any other Men , assaulted by subtile designing seducers, who have their worldly ends (on Church-pretences usually) to attain by their seduction : They are more in danger of the infectious breath of flatterers, and the false accusers of Godliness and good Men than any others : They use to be deprived of
the

the Common needful benefit to Mankind, of faithful and plain dealing Friends and Monitors, and truth is usually kept far from them, and out of such a hearing as if needful for Conviction. And to live continually under such dangerous Temptations, needeth more than Man for their preservation, from deceit, and sin, and the ruin of themselves and hurt of others.

10. Our obedience to God were far from a tryed praise worthy degree, if it cost us little or nothing : And doubtless Christ will bear all your charges. Oh what an excellent Servant is that, who will chearfully do all his duty, to an unjust and abusive Master? What an excellent Child is that, who useth all due Reverence, Obedience, Love and Patience, to a froward, harsh, yea and a Malignant Father. Not disobeying God, nor hazzarding his Soul by wilful sin, or forsaking Godliness, and yet not dishonouring his Parents, or disobeying them in any lawfull thing. What an excellent Wife is that who constantly and patiently performeth all loving and cheerful duty, to an abusive, furious, drunken, prophane, Malignant Husband: This requireth abundance more grace, than to live in cheerful love

love and duty to a Godly, tender, loving Husband. The former sort is called, more acceptable to God, and the latter sort of duty, is no glory, 1 Pet. 2. 20. To suffer for sin, is indeed a bitter suffering, even for that which is worse than suffering: 1 Pet. 3. 17, 18. *It is better if the Will of God be so, that we suffer for well doing than for evil doing: For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust; 1 Pet. 2. 11, 12. For hereunto were ye called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps, who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: Who when he was reviled, reviled not again, when he suffered he threatned not, but committed all to him that judgeth righteously. O follow this excellent example: There lyeth more of Christianity in learning of Christ to suffer from foolish wicked Men, than most will think of.*

Col. 3. 22. Servants obey in all things your Masters according to the flesh; not with eye service as Men pleasers, but in singleness of heart, fearing God; and whatever ye do, do it heartily as to the Lord and not to Men, knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the Inheritance, 1 Pet. 2. 18. Not only

only to the good and gentle but also to the
froward: These are the excellent Precepts
of Christ.

It is therefore inconsiderately said by
many, (If I had deserved such usage, I
could have born it.) As if suffering with-
out sin were not a lighter burden than
sin and suffering for it. The oppressor
hurts himself an hundred times more
than he can hurt you, (if you do no worse
to your self than he doth) as guilt of
oppression is as James calls it terribly, a
cause to such (to weep and howl for the
miseries that shall come upon them ? Their
Riches are corrupted, and their Gold and Silver
Cankered, and the rust of them shall eat
their flesh as fire, and they heap up Treasure
for the last daies. The cries of the Poor la-
bourers oppressed by them, are entered
into the Ears of the Lord ; They live
in pleasures and wantonness on Earth, and
nourish their hearts, in feasting and fulness,
and condemn and kill the just, who resist
them not. Be patient therefore Bretheren to
the coming of the Lord, Jam. 5. Luk. 18.
God will speedily avenge his elect that cry to
him, tho now he delay.

CASE VIII.

Superiours sufferings by bad Children, Servants, Tenants, or Subjects.

VIII. **A** Nother Case, that needeth Patience, is the suffering of Superiors by bad Children and Servants, Tenants, Tradersmen, and others, whom they must use and trust. Of bad Children I have partly spoken before: Natural love maketh this one of the heaviest afflictions in the world: When Parents have been at all that suffering, care, labour, and cost, which go to the bringing of Children into the world, and bringing them up from the breasts to maturity, and teaching them their duty to God and Man, and preparing them to be useful to themselves and others, that after all this they should prove brutish fleshly Sots, that are slaves to their bellies, and wallow in the sink of filthy lust, and savour nothing but pride and fleshly pleasure, and the belief of Gods word hath no power to change them, yea perhaps prove haters of serious holiness, and enemies of Good men, and plagues to their Country, and fight against the only means of their
own

own and other mens Salvation. Oh, what a heart breaking affliction is this? Yea, when in Case of the most ungodly error, or swinish appetite and lust, the counsel, the tears, the prayers of Parents cannot move them, to any true repentance or reformation: I confess, I that never had a Child, am no fit Judge of the heavyness of this Cross.

I have written my thoughts to such miserable youths, and partly to Parents, in a small Book, called *Compassionate Counsel to Young-men*: I here briefly adde,

1. In this sad Case, make not light of it, or as ungodly Parents do, that are troubled more for their Childrens wastefulness and want than for their Souls; And yet be not over much cast down: Neglect no means (prayer, counsel, company, &c.) which may tend to their recovery, while there is any hope; And especially look back (not with despair, but) with true repentance upon your own sins of youth against God, your Parents, and your selves. And then examine, whether you have dealt with Christian wisdom and fidelity to have prevented their misery, in their education. Did you with love and diligence labour

to make them understand the things of God and their Salvation? Did you labour to bring it to their hearts, that they might fear God and his judgements, and know the evil and danger of sin? Did you labour to make Religion pleasant to them by shewing them the goodness of it, and avoiding harsh averting wayes? Did you watch over their wayes, and keep them from a custome of pleasing their appetites over much? And did you ingage them in wise and godly Company, and use them in religious Exercises, and keep them from the infectious company of bad licentious youths, especially in places of Plays and Gaming, drinking and idleness, wicked Schools, or Academies, where temptations are too strong for fleshly unexperienced youth. If you have failed in these duties, and have sent your Children among the vicious, sensual and malignant, whether on pretence of learning, Ministry, Courtship, breeding, or gainful Trades; no wonder, if both they and you do suffer by it, and if they be plagues to their Country and to you, who have been plagues and treacherous to them, and sent them as into a Pest-House, or a Stews, and then are greived for their diseases.

2. Be

2. Be humbled for the vitiouſneſs of your own natures, which had the root of all theſe ſins, and conveyed them originally to your Children.

3. Let it make you the more ſenſible of the greatneſs of Gods Mercy, which hath healed your natures, and pardoned your ſin, and ſaved you from that wilful ſottiſhneſs and wickedneſs, which others are given over too, of which you were in danger.

4. The thoughts of the far greater miſery of moſt of the world, who lie in Idolatry, Infidelity, wickedneſs, or Error, may ſomewhat drown the ſenſe of a particular affliction; As the common plague in *London* did overcome the ſenſe of the loſs of our own friends; and the Common fire overcame the ſenſe of the loſs of our Houſes.

5. Yet while there is life there is hope: God hath waies enow to humble and break the ſtiffeſt and the hardeſt heart: Therefore pray for them and warn them to the laſt.

6. Grace maketh all Chriſts Members dear to us as well as our own Kindered: Chriſt himſelf answered when they mentioned his Mother and Bretheren, that they

they that heard Gods word and kept it were his Mother, Sisters and Bretheren: And when one said, *Blessed is the Womb that bare thee*, he said, *yea rather, blessed are they that bear the word of God, and do it.* Therefore rejoyce in the welfare of all the Children of God in Heaven and on Earth, who will be as dear to you, as your own Children.

7. Submit to Gods absolute Dominion who best knoweth what to do with his own, and never did wrong to any, nor can do, and will satisfie all at last of the Wisdom and goodness of all his dispensations.

II. Bad Servants also are to some an exercise of Patience, some will not learn nor be reformed, but hate goodness and live wickedly: Some in Drunkenness, Filthyness, Gaming, and Play-houses: Some deceive and rob their Masters; some are Eye Servants and Slothful, and make no Conscience of any fault or neglect which they can but hide, or excuse with lying: Some burn their Masters Houses, or undo them, or at least much damage them by heedlessness, carelessness, and forgetfulness; and the best of times prove very costly by such neglects.

In all these Cases 1. Repent of all your neglects of them: If you have not diligently taught them the principles of Religion, which should have made them better, or if you have not seriously endeavoured their true Conversion and Sanctification, and bringing Heavenly things to their hearts, which would have kept out the Love of sin; or if you have not taught them a Conscionable life, by a careful example of it in your selves; be humbled, and acknowledge the justness of your Correction, and bear as the fruit of your own sin.

2. Be sure that the sin and misery of your Servants be more grievous to you, than your own loss and suffering by them: It is but temporal things that you lose.

3. Remember what unprofitable and unfaithful Servants we have been to God, and how much more he daily beareth with in us all.

4. Remember that the frailty of Man is such, that nothing will be done perfectly which imperfect persons do: The wisest and best are lyable to many oversights, forgetfulness, and omissions, and have much which must be born with.

5. Be

5. Be the more careful that you fail not in any of the duty which you owe to them or any others: For our own sin hurts us more than theirs.

III. What I say of Servants, may serve as to the Case of bad Tenants who will not pay their Rents: And bad Tradesmen that unconscionably borrow and break, and live on other Mens Estates and ruine others by their falseness. God will permit Mans badness to shew it self; and he will have all worldly things appear to be transitory, unsatisfactory, and accompanied with vexation.

IV. As to the patience necessary in Princes and Magistrates to bad provoking Subjects, I am not to meddle with it, being discharged by Rulers from being a Monitor to them.

CASE IX.

False accusation, defamations; duty made odious crimes; reputation ruined.

IX. **A** Nother Case that needeth Patience is, *False accusation, defamation, and taking away our good name; when innocent Men are Proclaimed to be guilty of odious Crimes, which they detest far*

than their accusers do : Yea when the most Conscionable Men, that most fear all sin, are defamed by their Teachers themselves, as well as by the brutish Rabble, to be the worst Men in the Land, unfit for human converse, or to be Members of any Society, and unworthy to live, at least out of Goals. Sin is so much worse than Poverty, or any bodily suffering, that the imputation of it unjustly seemeth a greater tryal, than to be taken for a Beggar, or Leper. But the great tryal is, when Godly Magistrates or Ministers of Christ are taken for Rogues, Traytors, Schismatics, unconscionable villaines, by which their endeavours for the Souls of Men are rendered useles; And worst of all, when a Malignant generation shall make the generality of Men fearing God, and living Religiously, to be taken for the most wicked dangerous Hypocrites in the land. By this young and unexperienced persons, and the ignorant Multitude, are brought to a contempt or hatred of serious practical Religion, and made the Enemies of their best friends, and of the means of their own Salvation.

1. In this sad case, we must not on pretence of patience, and contempt of ho.

honour, be insensible of the snarcs that are laid by Satan to deceive the multitude, and undo Souls ; nor of the heinous wrong thats done to Christ, and the Christian Religion and Name: Yea this horrid Crime when it is common, doth so much threaten the destruction of a Land, and the removal of the Gospel, that it should make us all mourn and earnestly pray, that God would not leave so bad a people, that say, *Depart from us, we would not the knowledge of thy waies.* What wonder if Christ give up that Land to darkness and deceit, and Satan, and take away his Gospel, when the practice of it is made a common scorn, and taken for an intollerable evil. When Gods peculiar people were delivered into Captivity, the reason is given 2 Chron. 36. 14. *All the Chief of the Priests and the people transgressed very much, and the Lord sent his Messenger, because he had compassion on his people, and his dwelling places ? But they mocked the Messengers of God, and despised his words, and misused his Prophets, till the Wrath of the Lord arose against his people, and there was no remedy* Jer. 5. 5. *I will get me to the great Men, and speak to them; for they have*

known the way of the Lord. But these have altogether broken the yoke, and burst the bonds: Therefore a Lyon shall slay them, &c.

When Christ and his Apostles were taken for intollerable, God would tolerate the Nation no longer, but gave them up to the cruellest destruction that hath been heard of in the world, and the remnants of them are scattered, cursed people in all Countries to this day. When they cryed of such as *Paul*, *Away with such a fellow from the Earth*, it is not fit that he should live; God concluded, *Away with such a wicked Nation*, scatter them as cursed over the Earth. They that will themselves escape the destruction in such a Land, must mourn and cry for all its abominations, *Ezek* 9. 4. And must grieve for the reproach of the Solemn Assemblies, *Zeph* 3. 18. And a *Noah*, *Daniel*, or *Job* in it, may save none but their own Souls.

But yet as our Reputation is but our own personal interest, whether we are defamed for the Common cause of Conscience and obedience to God, or whether it be by any private malicious slander against our selves, we may bear it patiently.

For

For, 1. What is our Reputation, but the *thoughts and words of Men* concerning us? And how small a matter is this as to our selves? If they think well of you, you are never the better, and if they think ill of you, you are never the worse. If you be poor, or sick, or pained, will it ease you or make you Rich, for Men to think and say that you are well or Rich? And if you be rich and well, will it make you poor or sick for Men to think or say that you are so? And as the thoughts of Men alter not your state, so what is *Man* that his *thoughts* should be so much regarded by you. Thoughts are such unseen transitory actings of the mind, that we have much a do to make Men believe that there is any Law for them, or any great sin in them, or that God himself regardeth them. And when a Man is asleep, or thinks of other things, those thoughts are all laid by; and he must quickly die, and lie in darkness, and then what are his *thoughts*; or what is it to you what that rotten Carcass lately thought of you when it lived?

2. The usual cause of Impatience under personal disgrace and slander, is *Pride* in our *selves*, which is matter of a
 G 4 thousand

thousand fold more hurt and grief, than the loss of our *Reputation* is. Pride is an over-valuing our *Reputations* or honour with Men. A desire to be better thought of then we deserve, as to *Greatness*, *Wisdom* or *Goodness*, or else an over-great esteem and desire of that Reputation, which is indeed our due, did you not over-value it, you could easily spare it, and bear the loss of it. Oh fear the Devilish sin of Pride a thousand fold more than any dishonour. A truly humbled Soul can easily bear the thoughts and words of Men, as to its own interest: For he knoweth his own failings, and liveth not on Man.

3. If you will not be Hypocrites let there be some proportion between your Confessions to God, and your sense of the accusations and reproaches of Men. In Prayer you study enlarged Confessions, and how much evil do you (truly) say of your selves: And if another should wrongfully add somewhat more, methinks you might endure it: Is it not an incongruous thing to hear one in Prayer an hour together on a day of humiliation accuse himself to God of the breach of every one of the Ten Commandments;

or for troubled fearful persons, in all their discourse with Ministers or friends, to accuse themselves as utterly graceless, and resist all that can be said to the contrary; and yet for the same persons to be disquieted, and impatient, if another accuse them over-much, yea or less than they accuse themselves? There is some Hypocrisie in this.

4. Praise is a more dangerous thing to us than dispraise: and therefore our friends usually hurt us more than our Enemies. Flattery is pleasing to nature, and dispraise displeasing: But it is *Pleasing* things only that are overloved; and things overloved that undo the Soul. Praise is the usual fuel of Pride, and Pride the ready way to ruine: But dispraise calleth us to examine and Judge our selves, and is a help to Humiliation. And tho praise be due to all that is good, and other Men owe it to wise and good Men; yet the wisest and best are so apt to be tickled and pleased with it, that they seldom escape some degree of proud infection by it.

5. It is Gods Judgment to which we stand or fall: If he call us his Children it is a small matter what Men call us:

If he justifieth us, who is he that shall condemn us: As Paul saith, *It is a small matter to me to be Judged of Man*, or at Mans bar or day; *I have one that Judgeth me, even the Lord.* 1 Cor. 4. 3. What Man can make a great matter, what Men think or say of him, who believeth that he must live or die for ever, as God shall Judge him, and not as Men Judge him.

6. The thoughts and words of Men, do not so much as touch our skin: If they be let in to our hearts, and made our pain, it is not they but our selves that do it.

7. What kind of Men be they that slander, reproach and scorn Men for their duty to God or Man? Is it not miserable fools. led blindfold towards Hell in Satans Chaines? And are we not happy and safe in Christs Justification? And will a Lord or Prince be cast down if a Bedlam shall revile him, or because a Child of seven years old thinks meanly of him? How easily do Learned Men bear the contempt of the unlearned, and Great Men bear the obloquy of Beggars? It is not wise or Godly Men that dishonour you for being wise and Godly, but only

but only the ignorant and ungodly that speak against that which they never knew.

8. If it be for your obedience to God, the reproach is more against him than you : It was he and not you that made the Law which you obey. He that accuseth any one for obeying his Father, Master or Prince, doth most accuse them that Commanded him. If it be a fault and dishonour to mind Heaven above Earth, and to obey God and his word, before Man, it is long of God that so Commanded us, and not of us : And if they accuse God, be sure he is sufficient to confute them, and to defend himself; he will stop the mouths of all Blasphemers, and you may boldly trust him if you suffer for him, and your cause be his. A barking Dog may sooner stop the course of the Sun, than a Blasphemer conquer God.

9. Yea, it is one of the greatest Honours in the World to be dishonoured for God. You are deeply engaged for his cause, and he for you : You are principal Soldiers in his Army, & for suffering is the Victory of the Soldiers of Christ. If Gods Name, and cause, and interest, and promise cannot put Honour on you, nothing can.

10. The

10. The reproacher more dishonour-eth himself than you : It is a dishonour indeed to be a false accuser and slanderer, but none to be a patient sufferer.

11. And tho we be not guilty of that which malicious Lyars accuse us, we are guilty of many other sins, which God may correct us for by their tongues.

12. Christ went before us in this kind of suffering. *He made himself of no Reputation, but endured the Cross, despising the shame; He endured the contradiction of sinners against himself, Heb. 12. 2. &c.* He that came into the World to destroy the works of the Devil, and to save Men from sin, was said to be a sinner and to have a Devil, and to do his Miracles by the Devils help : They accused him to be a Glutton and a Wine-bibber, and a Sabbath-breaker, and a Familiar with *Publicans* and Sinners, and a despiser of Traditions, and Ceremonies, and Church Government, and an Usurper, and a Traytor against *Cesar*, and a Blasphemer against God; and that it might be believed, Crucified him as such between Malefactors, as worse than *Barabbas* a Murderer, and fastened his Accusation on his Cross, and to this day they call him a deceiver.

ceiver. And his Apostles were accordingly accused; *Paul* was called a Pestilent fellow, a mover of Sedition, that taught Men against *Cæsar* and the Law, and turned the World upside down, not worthy to live upon the Earth. The Apostles were made a gazing stock, the scorn of Men, the filth and offscouring of all things. And did we not resolve to follow Christ and them, and to bear this Cross.

13. But O what a joyful support to us should it be, to foresee by faith the approaching day, when all this will be set right, and Godliness will be a dishonour no more; when Christ will come to be glorified in his Saints, and admired in all them that now believe? *2 Thes. i. 10, 11.* And when these accusers and slanderers will all be silenced, confuted and confounded: And sin will be an everlasting shame. O what a change will that day make: Then who will have the Honour and Glory, and who will be cast out as the dung?

Object. But odious lies are divulged, Printed, and believed of me, and strangers and posterity will not know but all is true.

Answer.

Ans. And what if it be so? It toucheth you not now; and neither your body in the grave will feel it, nor your Soul in Heaven. Be patient Bretheren to the coming of our Lord, *Jam. 5.* Lies and false History are the Devils way by which he deceiveth most of the World: Its little thought by the Readers how much History is false. *Turks* and *Heathens* think odiously of *Christians*; and *Papists* of *Protestants*, and by Multitudes of lies cherish hatred and blood guiltiness in their followers. Pity the lyers, alas it is they that are the sufferers, that by this are hardened in Mortal sin. O what a blessed day is at hand, when all these slanderers will change their tune, and God will openly Justifie his Servants.

And in the mean time the wicked will believe the Father of Lies, and we cannot help it: But the faithful honour, upright Men not the less, but the more for calumnies which they endure, and had they not been prone to over honour them, holy daies and Relicks had not been used as they are.

Let it be your care to give the lyers no occasion by your sin; and then mourn
for

for the success of Satan, but joyfully wait for the Judgment of God.

CASE X.

Vexatious strong Temptations of Satan, especially to Melancholly persons.

A Nother Case that needeth Patience is, *Molesting strong Temptations of Satan, especially to afflicted, sad-discontented, and Melancholly persons.* As to alluring Temptations to sinful Love and pleasure, it is abhorrence and watchfulness, and fear that are more necessary than patience. But vexing Temptations, which would draw Men to murmuring, anger, malice, fear, hurtful grief, and such other sins, must be overcome by patience and watchfulness conjunct. But because against this I have written a Treatise of the *Cure of Melancholly and overmuch sorrow*, and another of the *true method of Peace of Conscience*, I will here only say this little following.

1. God did not think meet to keep Innocent Adam and Eve, no nor Christ himself from being tempted. This life is appointed for Tryal and Conflict in order to a better. Not to be tempted, were

were not to be Men on Earth ; There is no Crown of Glory, but to them that overcome ; and no victory, where there is no fight or strife : It is not force but temptations, by which Satan conquereth the world, and which all must conquer, that will be saved. Yea Christ was tempted to the most odious crime, to worship the Devil. But to be tempted is no sin of ours : Resist and conquer and it increaseth our acceptance with God, and (which some call our merit) our fitness for the reward. It may be an advantage to our own confirmed rooted Faith and holiness, and to our greater Glory in Heaven.

2. Satan is a conquered enemy : Christ our Head was tempted that he might overcome him for us : And as he said, *Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world ;* so we may beleive and rejoyce, that he hath overcome the Devil, that we might overcome him. *He was tempted, that he might succour them that are tempted ;* Heb. 2. 18.

3. All that are in Heaven (that had the use of Reason) came thither by overcoming of temptations on earth. And would you go a way different from them all ?

4. The

4. The Tempter cannot do what he will, but what God permitteth him; who hath promised to restrain him, that he may not over-power us, 1 Cor. 10. 13. There hath no Temptation ^{been} taken you, but such as ^{is} common to man: But God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the Temptation also make away to escape, that he may be able to bear it.

5. God seeth oft-times, that we have need of *troubling Temptations* to humble us, and to awake us from carnal security, and make us more hate the sin that we are tempted to.

6. But alas! we commonly are guilty of giving the Tempter his advantage against us: We provoke God by sin to turn him loose upon us, and we give him entertainment by long parleys with him, and by thinking over all that he hath against us, and leaving our imaginations open to his access, and oft also our eyes and ears to feed them. In these cases true Repentance is needful to our deliverance from temptations: Yea and our own mistakes, corruptions, discontents, impatience, and sinful passions are the very strength of the Tempter, and he findeth

eth within us, the fire which he bloweth up: In this Case, the Cure must be mostly wrought upon our selves.

7. Strong Love and Resolution rejoyce to conquer strong Temptations: As strong Men love not to be tied to the work of Children and Women, but would have such, as exerciseth their strength. Its the joy of friendship, to undergo much for a friend: *Cant.* 8. 7. Love is strong as death: Many waters cannot quench it, nor the floods drown it. If you would give all the substance of your House for Love, it would be utterly contemned. *Jacob* will serve long and patiently for Love. And when Satan sheweth his malice against Christ and us, strong Love would do as *Sampson* and *David* by the Philistims, go out against them in Gods strength and overcome them. And though we are weak, Gods grace is sufficient for us, and his strength is manifested in weakness.

8. Remember who the Tempter is that you may meet his Temptations with hatred and abhorrence. God did in mercy put an Enmity against Devils into our Natures, as soon as the Devils Enmity had conquered Man, that so we might abhor

abhor whatever we know to be from them. What if the Devil appeared to you in some shape, and perswaded you to dispair, or to Blaspheme God, or to doubt of the life to come, or to any other sin or mischief? Would it not be a sufficient preservative to know that it is the Devil that makes the motion. I do not think that the present forward Servants of the Devil would obey him as they do, if they saw him to be the Tempter. If he brought the Cup to the Drunkard in a known Apparition and shape, sure it would go down with terror if at all: If he brought a Harlot to the Whoremongers bed, it would cool his Lust: If he appeared and perswaded the Malignant to hate, deride and persecute Men for obeying God, it would sure abate their rage. And why should it not work alike in troubling Temptations, when you know they come from him; (which the nature and fruit of them may make you know.

9. Let Temptations move you to study their confutation: Know every snare, and the remedy, God hath furnished you in Scripture with Armour against all, if you will use it.

10. Long

10. Long for the blessed day when the Tempter and Troubler shall be cast out, and never more molest the faithful Soul, with any motion against God or comfort:

CASE XI.

*Settled doubts of sincerity and Salvation:
Temptations to despair.*

XI. **B**UT it is yet a heavier affliction, when a Soul is in a settled doubtfulness of its sincerity, Justification and Salvation, yea and strongly perswaded that he hath no grace, nor ever shall have, and hath little hope left of mercy and Salvation, and the more he examineth and thinks of it, the more he believeth this sad conclusion.

For an ungodly Man to know that he is ungodly is the most hopeful preparation to his recovery, and not to be filled or made light of, but if it be a sincere person,

1. Before I tell you how far *Patience* is useful in this Case, I must tell you that on pretence of patience, the *Cure* must not be neglected, nor contempt or senselessness indulged. Sin is it that bringeth Men into

into this dark uncomfortable state ; and it is present sin in which it doth consist : Search therefore what guilt of former sin was the cause, and see that it be truly repented of : And then search how much present sin doth cherish it. Usually there is much ignorance in it of the Covenant of Grace ; and a great defectiveness in our sense of the infinite Goodness of God , and of the wonders of his Love in Christ , and of the Ocean of mercy continued in the work of Mans Redemption : And there is much unbelief or distrust of God and our Redeemer, and of the promises of Grace and Salvation ; and too little trust to the strengthening and comforting help of the Holy Ghost : And there is too little care to Cure Mens sinful fears and passions ; and sometimes too little care to forbear renewing the wounds of Conscience by yielding to temptations, and renewing guilt. And where these are the Causes, they must first be resisted and partly overcome.

2. And while the Soul sincerely repenteth and striveth against that sin, (especially distrust of God and Christ) it must be considered that God giveth not all his Grace at once : Infants are not strong :

strong: Faith, Hope, Love and Comfort are weak before they are strong; and usually are long in getting strength: And weak faith hath alwaies unbelief joyned with it; and every weak grace is clog'd and clouded by its contrary sin. And while Grace is weak and sin thus cloudeth it, it cannot be expected that the Soul should have certainty of sincerity and Salvation; or be free from grief, and fears, and doubting. But Patient waiting upon Christ in the use of his appointed means, may in time bring faith and every grace to greater strength, and so the Soul to more assurance.

3. A Man that hath not attained to a certainty of Salvation may yet have more cause of hope and joy, than of fear and sorrow, upon the meer improbability of his Damnation. I have oft instanced thus: It would torment a good Christian, if he believed he should ever commit but such sins as *David*, and *Peter* did (to pass by *Solomon*) and no Christian ordinarily is sure that he shall not commit as great sin: And yet no wise Man that by Gods Grace is resolved against it, should torment himself with such a fear;

No Wife is certain but she may hate or forsake her Husband, or he may hate and Murder her; nor any Child but that the Father or Mother may Murder it: And yet it is so unlikely, that its folly to be sad with such a fear.

The Old Fathers, who thought that no ordinary Christian (but a few Confirmed ones) can be certain of perseverance or Salvation, and those *Lutherans* and *Arminians* that are of the same mind, did not yet live in terror for fear of Apostacy and Damnation, but rejoiced in the comfort of probable hope.

4. If your fears be whether you are true Christians, presently become such, and so end those fears: It may be its too hard for you to know whether you have been such till now: But you may presently resolve it for the time to come: Do but understand the Baptismal Covenant, and consent to it, and that work is done: Present consent that is unfeigned is true Christianity. If you can say that now you are truly willing that Christ with his Grace and Glory be yours, and you his on his Gospel terms, that is, your Priest, Prophet and King, you are true Christians.

Your

Your concluding that the day of grace is past, and God will never give you grace, nor pardon you, while he his daily intreating you to be reconciled to him, and accept his Grace, is an abusive suspicion that God is not sincere, and a contradiction to the Tenor of his word and instituted Ministry: When he bids us go to the high wayes and hedges, and compel (even the basest) to come in, for a willing Soul to suspect that God is unwilling is abusively to give him the lie: But if you are unwilling your selves why complain you? Its an odd sight to see a Begger in the cold intreated to come in to the fire, or a Man in the Sea intreated to come into the Ship, and he will not come, and yet cry and complain that he shall never be taken in; that is, because he will not.

5. It is a great mercy of God that you have hearts so far awakened as to be troubled with care and fear of your everlasting state, which you see the stupid dreaming World so little regard: And here are two comfortable Evidences appear in most Christians in these troubles. First, Your fear of punishment hereafter sheweth that you have some belief of the word
of

of God, for you believe his Threatenings: Else why do you fear them? And if you believe that his Threatings are true, it is scarce possible that you should believe that his promises are false: Therefore your defect is in the Application of these promises to your self; and to doubt of our own faith or sincerity is not to doubt of the truth or word of God, and is not damning unbelief (tho some mistakenly have written so): Secondly, And you have so much of the applying act, as consisteth in *consent and desire*: You would fain have Christ, and Grace, and Glory: And you *consent* to be *his* as he consenteth to be yours: Else why do your complaints and troubles signify so much. And *desire* signifieth Love and *willingness* as really as Joy doth, tho not so *pleasingly*. So that here is *Faith*, or *Consent or Willingness*, and Love to that which you mourn for want of: And those are Evidences of Grace.

Object. *But may not a wickid Man be terrified with the fear of Damnation?*

Ans^r. Yes: But if this fear were joyed with a *willingness* to be a true Christian, and to be Justified, Sanctified, and Ruled by Christ, he should be saved?

H

Object.

Object. But may he not be willing of Christ, and Holyness as a means to his Salvation, tho else he had rather be ungodly and live in sin.

Ans. 1. He cannot truly desire Salvation it self, as indeed it is Salvation: Not to be tormented in Hell he may desire: But Salvation is to be saved from sin and separation from God, and to live in perfect Holyness, Love and Joy in the Heavenly society, praising God among the blessed for ever: The heart of the ungodly is against this holy life. 2. And every Man hath some end: If this be not the End intended by any Man, it must be some sinful pleasure that he must intend or desire: And to mak Perfect Holyness (which mortifieth all such desires and pleasures) to be desired as a Means to attain those pleasures (which it destroyeth) is a contradiction: So that a wicked Man cannot truly desire perfect Holyness more than sinful pleasure, neither as his End, nor as the Means thereto. Yet I will not deny but that while he hateth it, he may consent that God should make him holy as a *minus malum*, a lesser evil than the pains of Hell, which he hateth more. But God hath not promised

mis'd to give Men Christ and holyness, because they hate Hell more than it; and desire it not for it self.

Object. *I fear that this is my Case: For I have a great unwillingness to Prayer, Meditation, an every holy duty.*

Ans. 1. Is your unwillingness to believe and trust God, and Love him perfectly, and to live in his thankful joyful praises, and to Love his word, and waies and Servants, and that for ever, greater than your willingness and desire? It is these inward acts that are the holyness of the Soul, and to be willing of these is to be willing to be holy. 2. As to outward exercises, by *Praying*, and such like, there may be some such disturbance of the Spirits raised by them, through temptations and false thoughts and fears, as put the mind into renewed trouble: And it is that disturbance and trouble in the duty, that many are against, rather than the duty it self. And such may find, that at the same time, they would fain have that Calmeness, confidence and delight in God, which they would be glad to express by holy Prayer. 3. And we must distinguish between a degree of unwillingness or backwardness which is *Predomi-*

nant and *effectual*, and a *degree* which doth but *strive against Holyness* but not *overcome*: Every Christian hath flesh, which lusteth against the Spirit, and would draw back; and therefore hath some degree of backwardness to his duty: But if this did prevail, he would give it over, which he doth not. 4. And yet for a time in temptation and Melancholly he may be deterred from some outward duty, and give it over, and yet not lose a holy state of Soul. Many a true Christian is many years affrighted from the Lords Supper: And some such persons in deep Melancholly and Temptations have given over outward Prayer, and hearing Sermons, and Reading: And yet have not given over a desire of Holyness which is heart-Prayer, nor a desire to Love and obey Gods word. Sick Men cease outward duty in their beds, when they cease not inward piety.

6. It may be God seeth that you were grown dull and sluggish, and he useth this trouble to awake you to a greater care of your duty and Salvation: Or he saw you in danger of over-loving some worldly vanity; and he useth this to embitter and divert you, that you may know

know better what to mind and desire.

7. The effects of a Melancholly disease, or of a natural timorousness of the weak and passionate, are much different from rational well grounded doubts of sincerity and Salvation: A Melancholly person can think of nothing with confidence and comfort: There is nothing but trouble, confusion, fears, and despair in his apprehension: He still seems to himself undone and hopeless. A person naturally timorous, cannot choose but fear, if you shew them the clearest reasons of assurance. These are like pain in sickness, which faith and reason will not cure; but should help us to strive against and bear. God will not impute our diseased misery to us as our damning sin.

8. Its one thing to have grace, and another thing to know that we have it: Many have it, who doubt whether it be sincere. And its an unspeakable mercy to have it, tho you doubt of it. God knoweth his grace in us, and will own it, when we doubt of it or deny it. As long as this foundation of God is sure, that *God knoweth who are his*, and while we *Name Christ we depart from*
H 3 *iniquity,*

iniquity, we are safe, tho through fear we are uncomfortable.

9. Tho true faith do of its own nature tend to the peace and quietness of the believer, yea and to fill his Soul with joy ; yet it doth not alwayes quiet it : But it alwayes (*Consenteth to the Baptismal Covenant, which maketh us Christians, and so far trusteth Christ for pardon, grace and glory, as to cast our Souls and hopes upon him, and to forsake all other trust and hopes rather than to forsake him : As I have oft said, If a Prince say to a Beggar, go out of thy own Country with me in this Ship, and trust me to convey thee to Mexico or China, and I will make thee a Lord or Prince, if he venture and go with him, tho he trembles with fear at every wave or Pirate in the Voyage, he truly trusteth him, and shall speed accordingly : If a Phyician say, trust me and take my Medicine, and I undertake to cure you ; if the Patient Take his Medicine, he shall be cured, tho he tremble with fear and doubt of the success : He Trusteth him Practically, if he cast his hope upon him, tho with fear. Tho Faith and Obedience be formally two things, Faith which will cause us to consent, venture, and follow or obey Christ ;*
preferring

preferring Heaven whatever we lose by it, is saving faith, whatever doubts, fears or disquietment remain. If this were better understood, timorous and dark or Melancholly Christians, (who know there is none but Christ to trust to, and therefore resolve to be Ruled by him) would not so ordinarily think they have no true faith, because it doth not cast out all their doubts and fears, and quiet and comfort them ; which indeed a strong faith would do, which is not hindered by error or diseases.

10. We greatly wrong God and our selves in contenting our selves with poor diminutive thoughts of the essential Love and Goodness of God. When we think of the Sun (a thousand times bigger than all the Earth) and of all the Stars, and the incomprehensible Orbs of the Heavens, and the unconceivable swiftness of their motions, and the power and extent of their Rayes of Light and emanations, we are overwhelmed with the thoughts of the greatness, power and wisdom of God : But when we think of his *Goodness* and *Love*, we scarce think much more highly of it, than of the goodness and love of a Father, a friend,

or some excellent Man. And should we match his *Power* but with a Mans, what madness and ugly Blasphemy were it ?

Yet I would not have the presumptuous here mistake, and hence conclude that a God so good will not condemn the rejecters of his grace; and say, *Essential infinite Love will make all Men as happy as he can* : For 1. Experience assureth us of the contrary ; that he maketh great variety of Creatures , and permitteth pain and misery in the world. 2. And the Execution of Justice on the impenitent wicked Subjects , is good , as a means to the right Government of free Agents. 3. And the *infiniteness* of Gods *goodness* and Love , doth not appear in his Loving any Creature which is finite, but in loving that which is *infinite*, and that is *himself*.

But yet we must conceive of his essential attributes as equal in themselves: And if Gods goodness and love were conceived of by Man, in any proportion to his greatness and power, we could never so easily suspect his kindness, nor fear that he will damn those who unfeignedly desire to please him; nor should we fly from him as from a hurtful Enemy , but
long

long to be nearer him in holy Communion, as we desire the Company of our wisest dearest friends; nor should we be so distrustful of him, as if he were no security to us from our dangers; but the name of the Lord would be our strong Tower, to which when we fly we should believe that we are safe, and our *trust* in God would be the quieting of our tormenting fears and cares.

II. And we have these poor thoughts of the Love of God to Man, because we do not sufficiently study the Miraculous demonstrations of it in our Redeemer; diversions cause us to neglect this study: And perverseness and unbelief do cause us to give it too narrow a Room, and too slight and short entertainment in our thoughts: Nothing in this world doth better deserve our most diligent and delightful study, than the Gospel of Christ, and the wonderful work of Divine Love in Mans Redemption and Salvation, study this till you firmly believe it, and taste it, and it will be as Angels food, a heavenly feast here sent down to Earth, to draw Mens hearts to God in Heaven: The Love of God will turn your very hearts into

returning holy Love: It was drops of Love that Christ sweat in the shape of blood in his Agony, and it was a stream of Love, which flowed from his pierced side, in the shape of blood and water: It is love which the three witnesses on Earth, and the three from Heaven attested. God knew how much sin had obscured his Love and goodness to Man, more than his power and greatness, by making Man an unmeet receiver and discerners of it, by reason of guilt, fear, and naughtiness of heart; and therefore how very backward Man is to believe and relish Gods Love. Therefore while Satan more industriously enticeth the Soul of Man to the Idolatry of Creature-carnal Love, than ever he did entice the bodies of Men to worship *Baal* or such like, God hath set up his own Image, sent down to Man from Heaven, in opposition to Satans Idols, that sense it self may have suitable means for the Moral conquest of the tempter, and the replenishing of the Soul with a truly excellent felicitating Love, and in a congress of the Love of God and Man, in and by him that is God and Man, Heaven may be here begun, and may have a fuller Communion.

munion with Souls on Earth, than it had before Christs Incarnation. Study the Gospel aright, as the book of Divine Love, and it will turn you from many unprofitable Studies, and cure sinful Melancholly fears, better than all other Medicines in the world: And even those that said with *Thomas*, [*unless I may see and feel I will not believe* (or as a holy Divine in deep Melancholly rashly said to me, [*If an Angel from Heaven should tell me that I have true grace I would not believe him*)] would repent as both these did; and when by faith you have as it were put your finger into his wounded side the sense of Divine Love will make you cry out, *My Lord, and my God.*

12. And it greatly hurteth Christians that they are not duly sensible, how much it is Satans design and work in all his temptations to misrepresent God to Man, and hide his Love and Goodness from us: As he doth it in the wicked by drawing them to fleshly deluding Love, and making them ignorant, unbelieving or forgetful of the Love of God; so he doth much against better Men by raising many objections against it, and filling them with false imaginations, and diminutive

or suspicious thoughts of God, as if he were far more terrible to us than amiable.

13. And it wrongs some that they misunderstand the office of Conscience, as if it alwayes spake as an Oracle from God, whereas it is but the act of a dark understanding, which very usually erreth, and misjudgeth of our state : And a mistaking Conscience accusing falsely, as graceless, &c. Shall no more condemn us at Gods Bar, than a slandering Enemy. *I Judge not my own self, saith Paul, I know nothing by my self (inconsistent with sincerity) yet am I not thereby justified: There is one that judgeth me, even the Lord: That is, It will not really go with me as I judge, but as God judgeth.*

14. And alas when fear beareth down both faith and reason, as to the act, no silencing reason prevaiileth with the Soul. I prove to them from the Gospel this great truth, that [*Christ damnetb none (that hear the Gospel) but those that wilfully reject him and refuse his offered grace, out of greater Love to something else, and this to the last.*] I oft convince dejected Christians that this is true, and that this is not their Case; they do not continue to refuse

fuse Christ and his grace, by preferring something else. And yet this quieteth them not; nor receive they the conclusion: For fear, and feeling, and weakness, and Melancholly overpower their reason, as bitter Physick, would not let Children believe that it is good for them, and given them in love.

15. Tho no pretence of patience must abate our desires after full assurance and perfection, yet while we find by experience that God will have Man on Earth, to differ much from those in Heaven, and to have but low and little things in comparison of their joy and glory, it is our great duty to be thankful for our present measure, and to wait in hope for more. He that hath no comfortable apprehension of his condition can have no thankfulness for it: And we are all obliged to great thankfulness for the least degree of grace and hope: And thankfulness is somewhat more than patience, and therefore doth include it.

The acts of the understanding and of the Will go together: And if we had as full an understanding of the Heavenly state, as those have that possess it, our Wills by answerable Love and Joy, would
own

now enjoy it; and so we should have the peculiar priviledges of the glorified here on Earth: But this is no more suited to our present state in flesh, than it is to an infant in the Womb to know what Cities, Courts and Churches are, or what Trades, and Merchandize, and Husbandry is, or what Books, and Arts, and Sciences are; or what Meat, and Drink, and Recreation are. We must be content on Earth with the measure which God deligneth unto Earth. We see by constant experience that he hath precluded the Heavenly state from all our senses: He will not let us see whats done above: The first Martyr had such a sight by Miracle, but we must not expect it: He will not let our departed friends appear to us here to give us notice of what they see: He will not send Angels to satisfie our desire of such knowledge: Nay infernal Devils shall appear but rarely: The rareness of all these leaveth sadness in doubt whether there be any such things or not. And *Pauls* sight of Paradise was such as must not be uttered to us.

And full subjective certainty of Salvation, which excludeth all doubts and fears,

feare
thin
very
Salv
lute
hop
to b
appr
and
or a
exc
ther
are
and
cont
deg
wit
Rev
firm
ble
may
far
and
wel
tain
far
tan
An
wh

fears, is so high a degree as few in flesh I think obtain. Objective certainty every true Christian hath : That is, his Salvation (if he so die, at least) is absolutely certain it self, so that his belief and hope of it, shall never deceive him: But to be *certainly known to Men*, that is, with an apprehension which as much excludeth doubts and fears as sight and possession would do, or as the Light and the visible objects exclude all doubts, whether we behold them, or as we know that *two and two are four*, or that every effect hath a cause, and every relate a correlate, and that full contradictions are inconsistent, I think this degree of certainty none have upon Earth, without some Miraculous Inspiration or Revelation. But we may attain to so firm an apprehension of that truth and blessedness, which is certain in it self, as may make our hope, and joy, and desire far greater than our doubts and fears, and averfation. And this joyful life of well grounded hope may be called a certainty or full assurance; tho yet it be far short of Perfect, and the certainty of Beatifical vision and fruition. And alas, it is but very few true Christians who attain this quieting joyful degree.

All

All this being considered you see that while we are on Earth we must no look for Heaven; nor in the Wilderness to find the Land of promise: *Joshua*, and *Caleb*s encouraging words, and the bunch of Grapes, and Gods promise and presence, and his conducting light, provision and protection, must quiet us in our Journey; and some few have *Moses Pisgah* sight. Murmuring at Wilderness wants, dangers and difficulties was the *Israelites* sin and fall. We must not look for the Harvest at seed time, nor for more knowledge, and assurance, and joyful apprehensions of Heaven, on Earth, than is suitable to the state of Travellers in flesh: We are yet alas too sinful: And sin will breed doubts and fears: We are here very ignorant, and conscious that we are very lyable to Err; and that every Man hath many errours; and therefore we are apt to doubt even of that which we see and feel, yea and to fear where we see convincing Evidence of certainty; and we can scarce tell when and how to trust our own understandings: We are in a dark World; and in a dark body, and chained to it in our actings: All our grace and goodness is imperfect: And

And
fura
For
nec
such
and
Mal
muc
as o
The
held
fons
on,
they
and
than

The

XII

of t
Gos
cing
wan
anc
tha

And till every grace be perfect in us, assurance of Salvation will not be perfect : For the Perfection of every grace is necessary to it : And is it any wonder that such a wight as Man, in flesh, and sin, and under Temptations, and in a dark Malignant world, which God hath very much forsaken, should not have the Joy as of full assurance of invisible glory ? The Christians of all those ages, who held that none (or only a few rare persons) could be certain of their Salvation, could not have that certainty which they thought none had ? Yet they did, and we must rejoyce in hope, and be thankful here for a Travelling degree.

CASE XII.

The loss of Teachers, and suitable means of Grace and Salvation.

XII. **A** Nother great affliction which requireth Patience is, *The loss of the sound and serious Preaching of the Gospel, by the death, or Banishment, or silencing of our Teachers, while our own great wants and weakness call for the best assistance.* The Soul being more precious than the Body, the welfare of it is more valuable,

valuable, and its loss and famine more lamentable : And we see that God ordinarily worketh according to the aptitude of means : And when he taketh away such needful means, it is a sad degree of his own forsaking us, and denying to us further grace : Alas, how bad are we under the best helps, and how dark and doubting under the most clear convincing teaching, and how cold, and dull under the most warm and lively Ministry : And what shall we then be, if God remove our Teachers from us ? May we not turn cold, and dull, and worldly, and deceived, under cold, dull, *deceiving Worldly*, Pastors ? And grow careless of our own Souls under those that are careless of their own and ours ? If in the Communion of wise and holy Christians, we found it hard to grow in grace, may we not fear declining when we are separated from such, and dwell as *Lot in Sodom*, and must converse with worldly or Malignant Men ?

As to the sad case, 1. You may have the greater comfort, because you make not light of the affliction ; and may be the more patient believingly, because you are not patient as contemptuous unbelievers.

lievers. The patience of carnal Men under such a loss, is a greater evil than the loss it self: And the patience of faith is a greater good, than the helps which you lose. Had you been so blind, and dead and bad, as to let go the Gospel, and be easily quiet and content as long as you enjoy your honour, wealth and ease, this had been a far greater misery than a want of Teachers: As a mortal sickness which causeth loathing and indigestion, is worse than the hardest fare with appetite and health. Thank God that you are sensible of your loss.

2. If you are true Christians you have the Law and Gospel written upon your hearts, whence none can by violence take it from you, you may lose the provision of your House, and the food on your Tables; yea and cast up that which you have eaten: But if it be digested and turned into your flesh and blood, it is not so easily taken from you. O blest God, that before he took away the means, he did convert you by them, and taught you effectually before he took away your Teachers. When the word is digested and turned into knowledge, faith, repentance, desire, obedience, patience, hope and love, neither

ther Men nor Devils can take it from you ; your heart where it is sown and rooted is not within their reach ; unless you will give them the Key, and foolishly betray your selves. When God hath made you his *Habitation by his Spirit*, and Christ dwelleth in your hearts by faith, and the Kingdom of God, and life Eternal is begun within you, the loss of outward helps will not undo you. I am not imitating them that tell you, that all Men have sufficient light within them, or that call you to undervalue the word written and Preacht, on pretence of that sufficiency, as if you need no other notice of God, and Christ, but to be told that he is in you. But yet rejoyce that God is within you, tho all these outward means were gone : That is, that your *Faith* and *Love* have within you such an object to live upon as your *Father*, *Saviour* and *Sanctifier*, and such an Agent as the Spirit to actuate all. When they silence your Teachers, burn your Books, shut up your Church doors, they cannot shut out the Spirit of Christ, nor deprive you of its *Life*, and *Light*, and *Love*.

3- If Men take away the means foremen-

mentioned, they do not therefore take away all. 1. You have all Gods works to view and study: Sun and Stars, Heaven and Earth, Sea and Land, Cities and Country, Feilds and Meadows, Beasts and Men, good and bad: And you are taught already by the Gospel to see not only the great Creator in all these, but also the *Gracious Redeemer*, purchasing, upholding, and using all as delivered to him for the good of his Elect.

2. You have the daily use of Meditation, as on all these works God, so also on Christ and the Gospel which you have learnt; yea and of the Joys of Heaven.

3. You have daily and hourly leave to open your Case to God; you have access to him by Christ in Prayer, Thanksgiving and Joyful Praise. If you have but an appetite, you have here a continual feast, which you may enjoy in every place; in your Closet, in the Feilds, in your Shop, or in a Prison.

4. Its very likely that you may save your Bibles, and other good Books, and so have Gods word still at hand: It was written in Hebrew and Greek, but God hath used Man to Translate and unseal it to you; And you may choole your time,
and

and choose the Subject which you would read : And the writings of your Teachers are usually more accurate than their speaking ; and at a cheap rate you may have choice, and excellent helps. And you may read these in your Families to your Children and Servants, and set up many Teachers for one. Undervalue not these remaining helps.

5. And if God continue to you in the publick Assemblies, but sound Doctrine and lawful Communion, do not say *all means are gone*. If it be but the Reading of the Holy Scriptures , and Singing Psalms , and Praying no worse than is expressed in the Liturgy of this Nation, it is a mercy not to be despised : It was but a little part of the New-Testament, which was contained in *Peters* Speech which Converted three thousand, *Act. 2*. And but a little part which was in the words of *Paul* , which the *Gentiles* desired might be again spoken to them the next day : And but a little part which *Paul* wrote to any one Church, when he required them to Read it publickly, and to Read that to one Church, which was written to another : Christs own Sermon *Luk. 4*. And that to his Disciples
Matth.

Math. 5. Were but a little of what bare Reading now can tell us. *Ezra* was put to spend much of the day in a Pulpit to Read the Law, and make them understand the Reading: That is, when by their Captivity they had lost the Language in which the Law was written, he was fain as he Read it in Hebrew, to Translate it by word of mouth, and turn the Hebrew into the Chaldean Tongue which they understood. This was far less than the bare Reading of both Law and Gospel already Translated doth for you. The quantity of one or two of our Chapters, were received in the daies of the Apostles, with great joy, to the conversion of many Souls. And in *Queen Maries* daies some poor Women would hire a Boy secretly in a Corner to Read to them a little of the English Bible, yea of the Primer. But the full Soul loaths the Hony Comb, when to the hungry every bitter thing is sweet.

There are some ignorant Christians that think it enough to charge any thing in Worship or Religion to be unlawful because it is humane, the work of Man. Its like these will not be grieved that their Teachers are silenced: For they
were

were Men. And as Men have written some forms of Prayer, so they are Men that have written the many hundred holy Books that are now among us : And Preaching and Praying, are the words and works of Men : The Singing Psalms were turned into Metre by Men : Yea all your English Bibles were made English by Men, and you Read and hear no English words but the words of Men, tho they signifie the word of God : The dividing of the Scripture into Chapters and Verses, is the invention and work of Men : And I think they were but Men that taught you to speak and Read : God worketh by Man on Man, as sociable fit Instruments : And if you despise all in Religion, that is the work of Man, you will despise the word and work of God, and shew that you are less than Men.

4. When God taketh Teachers from one People (before death) he usually sends them to another : And it proveth oft to the advantage of the Church. When the Disciples were all driven away from *Jerusalem*, they went Preaching the Gospel into all Countries about. Persecution drove the Apostles all over the

the world: It sent *Paul* to *Rome* to Preach it at the doors of *Nero*: When he and *Barnabas* were driven from one City, they carryed the Gospel to another: Persecution had a great hand in sending the Gospel to most Nations in the World that had it. Yea the very Banishment of such as *Nestorius*, *Dioscorus*, and others such as Hereticks, for some formes of Speech, had a great hand in the sending of Christianity into *Persia*, *India*, and many remote parts of the East, South and North, and of late to *New-England*, and other Plantations in *America*, it was sent by the Prelates, and other Rulers from this Land. A Captive Maid its said, began the Conversion of the *Iberians* as *Frumentius* and *Edisius* did of the *Indians* (or rather planted a Ministry in *Habasssea*, miscalled *India*, which before had none but Lay Christians since the Eunuchs daies.)

And every good Christian is of a publick Spirit, and loveth Christs greatest interest with the greatest Love, and therefore loveth the Church and the world better than himself, or his native soil: Why than should we not the more patiently bear the loss of those Labourers,

I

whom

whom God sends to do greater work abroad : Is it like that Mr. *John Eliot*, would ever have done half the good in *England* that he hath done in *America*? We pray that Gods name may be hallowed, and his Kingdom come, and his Will be done on Earth as it is in Heaven, and *England* is a very little part of the Earth.

5. We must have our time of Rest with Christ when we have had our time of Labour : If God call home his Servants to himself, rejoyce with them that there rejoyce, and have fought a good fight, and have finished their Course, and do receive the Crown of Righteousness : Grudge them not their Rest and Happiness. God sent them hither to work, run, and fight, and not to Reign or long abide : It may seem hard to us that so holy a Man as *Stephen* should do Christ no longer service in his Church; and that *James* who hoped to have sit next Christ in his Kingdom on Earth, should so quickly be taken from the work of his Apostleship : But he had his Petition to be near to Christ in a better manner than he desired : And *Stephen* and he did more in a day by dying than most others do by living long : The Foundation of the Church

Church was to be laid in Blood ; and none is too preclous for so great work, for which Christs blood was not too precious.

6. Ministers be not idle or useless when they are silenced : They are Praying for the Church, and they are Lights in the Houses and Company where they come , and Christ disdained not oft to Preach to one Woman or Man, (as *Joh. 4. and 9. &c.*) And some of them publish Gods truth by writing , and that to a far greater extent and number, than ever they could have done by voice : The word of God is not bound when we are bound.

7. Yea the silence and sufferings of Christs faithful Ministers, do powerfully Preach : It maketh Men see the evil of that proud and Malignant Spirit , which hateth such Men, and cannot endure them : The vulgar are hardly brought to wisdom by meer words, or to know the difference between good and evil, till by sense and experience they feel and tast the several fruits : The Cured blind Man , *John 9.* could quickly discern that God heareth not sinners, but if any Man be a (true) Worshipper of God, him he heareth : And that he must needs be of God that could open his eyes :

And that therefore those Men were not of God that hated and Persecuted him that did so much good. The vulgar hate Popery far more for *Queen Maries* Bonfires, and the *Inquisition*, and the *French*, *Bohemian*, *Polonian*, *Piedmont* and *Irish* Massacres, than for any Doctrinal Errour in their Religion : And when long experience hath assured them that the Persecuted Ministers Preached the true Gospel of Jesus Christ with great plainness, seriousness, and love to Souls, and that they sought no Worldly gain or Honour, but Mens Salvation ; and that they lived as they Preacht, and when they see that it is this very sort of Men that Papists bend their malice against, and study to extirpate, silence and destroy, and that *Godliness* and *Conscience*, is the intolerable Enemy, which they would drive out of the Land, and that the most wicked, sensual, filthy, debauched, unconscionable Malignants, are their Agents, and the Men that they employ and trust, who will obey them before God, and against him ; This loudly tells the people what they are ; and by their fruits, Wolves, Thorns and Thistles, are known : They can tell whose Servants they are by their work.

works, better than by their Livery, Cloathing or names. To hinder the Gospel and good of Souls, and make the Godly a hated scorned Persecuted People, and cause Men of no Conscience to be better thought of, is the Devils work, yea his chiefest work in the World : And they are so far his Servants that do it ; by what Names or Titles soever they be called. And as humane nature hateth cruelty, and Christianity hateth ungodliness, Malignity and Persecution, so these works do effectually Preach to the People, and tell them who are their friends, and who their foes : What to love and what to hate.

8. God will do his work by others when we are dead and gone. Successive Generations must partake of his mercies, and do his service here, and not the same Men still continue. And when we grow dull with age and weakness, young Men of greater vigour and alacrity shall succeed us.

9. And it hath hitherto been Gods way, to carry on his work with great mutations and variety in the world. As he causeth Winter and Summer, Nights and Dayes, so his Church hath had hitherto

therto its turns of prosperity and adversity: And prosperity hath increased the number of Christians, and adversity hath tryed them, and increased the grace of those that persevere.

10. It is more our diligence and faithful use of means, by which we grow in grace, than by the enjoyment of the best, if we be slothful under it: And sometime God seeth that fullness breedeth wantonness and loathing; and like foolish Children we play with our meat, or quarrel about it; And then its time to take it away, and let fasting help us to a better appetite. I have known those that when they lived among the ignorant, and could hardly hear a good Sermon without going divers Miles for it, and hardly borrow a good book, and rarely speak with a serious Christian, were so hungry, affectionate and diligent, that they evidently profited very much: But when they came where they had variety, choice and fulness of Teachers, Books and Religious converse, some grew more notional, wordy, and cold, and some turned self-conceited, proud and quarrelsome, and some down-right Heretical or Schismatical: And do we need any more to
 justify

Justifie the afflicting Providence of God, in taking away and silencing Ministers, than the sad review of our common miscarriages? Have not pious Ministers been disgracefully guilty of over-valuing their own Judgments and Opinions, and laying Life and Death on Words which they understood not, and raising Hatred, censures and contempt, against their Brethren that differed from them, though wiser and better than themselves? What shameful and doleful work did the Nestorian, and Eutychian, and Monathelite Controversies make? The doleful Wars about Predestination, Grace, and Free-will, which have torn the Church and destroyed Love, these twelve hundred years; I have fully proved to be shameful and sinful, most about ambiguous words, or unrevealed things (in a Book called *Catholick Theology*). We have heard with grief what unchristian contentions there have long been beyond Sea, among Protestants called *Lutherans* and *Calvinists*; and how oft the former have persecuted the latter: We have heard of late, how some represent Calvinists, as if they were as bad as Heathens; and some in

the Pulpits say, *the Religion of the Arminians is the Religion of the Devil* : If none of these speak the words of Truth or Charity, nor know either what they say, or what manner of Spirit they are of; is it not just with God to silence them all? What dreadful work hath the Interest and Controversies of Dioceses, Liturgy and Ceremonies here made? And when we cannot bear with one another, it is just with God to bear with none of us. How long have Episcopal, Presbyterians, Independants and Anabaptists, been censuring, condemning, and some of them persecuting one another; and been teaching the People to believe, that those that they accuse deserve it? And if we thus shew that we all deserve it. how can we open our Mouths against Gods Justice if he reject us all?

11. As when God taketh away strength, health and liom the Aged, they must be thankful that they enjoyed all these so long, and consider how they used them while they had them; so when he taketh away Ministers and publick Helps, we must be thankful that we had so long peaceable enjoyment of them; and

and consider whether it be not for our abuse that we are deprived of them.

12. God is not tyed to outward helps, though he tye us to them while we may have them: If he take them from us, he can give us that grace in our secret Closets, which we had in the publick Assemblies; and we may expect his assistance and blessing in any means which he appointeth us to use.

CASE XIII.

When God seemeth not to bless Means to us; Preaching, Praying, &c.

XIII. **A**Nother great tryal of Patience is, when *Praying and Preaching seem to us to be all lost, and God denieth his Answer and his Blessing.* When we hear from day to day, and understand and remember little that we hear, and find not that we are any stronger in Faith, Love, and Patience than we were: When we pray daily for more Grace, and yet find no more than we had before: And we pray for our Country, and our Rulers, and Teachers, and for many Friends, and God seemeth to deny us almost all.

And this is not only grievous in it self, but in the Temptations which it occasioneth. 1. Satan hence would tempt us to doubt whether God regard man and mans concerns, as the Scripture tells us that he doth. 2. And he would tempt us to doubt whether the Promises of God are to be trusted. 3. And consequently to question all Religion, and to give over praying and other means, as if all were vain; or at least to use them heartlessly, with little Faith, and Hope, and Comfort: And how should *Patience* here be exercised, and these Temptations overcome.

1. Our first work must be to understand *Gods instituted means*, and the *Promises of God* concerning their success, that we may neither be too *high* nor too *low* in our Expectations, nor charge God falsely through our mistake.

What is it that God denieth you? Is it outward things, as health, wealth, deliverance from dangers, the life of your Friends, the conversion of your Relations, &c. and why think you that Prayer in such Cases is in vain?

1. Did you think that it was ever the mind and promise of God, that on

pretence of hearing Prayers, he should give up to us the Government of the World? And that we should never be poor, nor sick, nor die till we are willing? I doubt then few would ever consent, but live longer than *Methusalem* in earthly prosperity and pleasure? And must our Friends never suffer nor die as long as we will pray against it? Where then would there be room for those that are born (unless God made our Friends a burden to us; and would not that be as much against our Prayers as their Death)? Did you think that God must reverse his first Sentence, if you will but pray for it? *Dust thou art, and to Dust thou shalt return. In the sweat of thy Face shalt thou eat Bread till thou return unto the Ground.* Gen. 3. 17, 18, 19. Must there be no Thorns or Bryers, no Cold or Winter, no Night or Darkeness, if you will but pray that there be none? You will say, it is more moderate and reasonable Prayers that you make.

But 2. Who must be Judge what requests are reasonable, God or you? If you must be Judge, how can we tell what bounds your desires will have? You will

will not ask to live in Prosperity a thousand years; but when Death is coming at an hundred years end, you would live yet longer, and so on for ever, still longer and longer; and a thousand years would not make you willing, if either Faith or Affliction do it not.

3. And would you have all others have the same Grant, that Affliction and Death should be kept off if they do but pray for it; and that God should give them what they ask? this would infer a thousand contradictions: A thousand men would ask to be Kings of *England*, when there can be but one: Many would ask for the same Lordship, Lands or Offices: Some of them would take you for Enemies, and ask for your death or ruin, and it may be you would ask for theirs: They would have your House, your Wife, your Trade; and you would have theirs: So many would live long, as that you would want Food and Room: What a mad wish were this, for all men to have their Wills? The World is full of Folly and Wickedness, and Wrath, and Malice; should all such Persons have their Wills? What's this Conceit but a Dream of
 nil.

millions of mischiefs, confusions, and impossibilities ? One may see by such desires how the World would be Governed, if God gave it up to the Will of Man ? Could there be any Unity, where every Man, would Rule, and every Man hath an interest cross to others ? Can there be any order or goodness, when all Men are partly bad, and every bad Man would have his Will ?

But you will say, that it is not bad Men, nor bad desires that you would have God to grant, but only what is just and good. *Ans.* But who shall be Judge, what is just and good ? If every Man must be Judge, unjust and wicked Prayers must be granted : And the Judgment and wishes of many will be against yours : If it be you that must be Judge, tho its like that is it that you would have, you cannot for shame sure speak it out : This were for God to resign his place to you, and make you the God or Governour of the World, and only those Prayers must be granted which you think just and good ? Whence are all the bloody Wars in the World, but that one King would have that which another hath, or have his Will against another ? You may see
then

then that its worse than Madnes to desire, that any but God should be the highest disposer of the affairs of Men, and determine what shall befall us in this World.

4. And do you think that God is unfit to do it? Doth he want *Wisdom to know* what is best? Doth he want *Goodness to choose* what is best? Or doth he want *Power to do* what is best? Who hath it if God want it? And how come they to it if not by him? And doth he give more than he hath himself. If he have any imperfection he is not God.

5. It is most certain that all things are done well by God, and as they should be: And therefore the cause of your dissatisfaction is in your selves. And indeed in these several evils you may find it. 1. By your sin you provoke God in Justice to correct you and deny your Prayers. 2. And by your present badness you make your selves unfit for that which you desire that is good. 3. And by your blindness and fleshly mind, you desire that which is not to be desired: 4. And after all this by your Idolatrous usurping self-will, you are discontented with God for not giving you your desires. These
four

four things contain your Case : And is not every one of them a shameful evil ?

II. But suppose that it be not outward things, but more grace, and assurance, and *comfort*, and *deliverance* from *temptation* and *sin*, that you pray against, and God doth not give it you : Is not this cause of questioning the success of Prayer, or of doubting at least of my own success, and whether my Prayers are not all in vain.

Ans. That I may give you full satisfaction, I will tell you. 1. What kind of means Prayer is. 2. What Prayer it is that is such a *means*. 3. What may be expected by means of Prayer, and what not. 4. I will prove to you that Prayer is not in vain, nor Gods promises to it broken. 5. I will shew you why you should be patient under Gods denials.

I. Prayer is not a *Purchasing* means, nor a *meriting* by giving God any thing which may benefit him ; nor doth it work any change on God ; but it procureth blessings by fitting the Petitioner to receive them. And that in several respects : 1. Even *Naturally* considered, it is a contradiction for a Man to be *un-*
willingly

willingly happy, and to attain the happiness which he desireth without so much as asking him that alone can give it, 2. Morally considered, a Man is very unfit for, and unworthy of the benefit which he thinks not worth his asking; especially if it be the greatest blessing that Man is capable of, which he so despiseth. 3. And Legally considered, the gift cannot be his, that performeth not the condition imposed by the Doner, especially when it is but so reasonable a one as ask and have.

So that you see though Prayer purchase not, and change not God, it is a naturally, Morally, and Oeconomically necessary qualification and condition of our reception, and thus only it hath the Nature of a means.

II. There are three sorts of Prayer, which are not in vain, and yet much differ as to their success. 1. There is Prayer that is not dissembled, but cometh only from natural principles or Common grace; such as *Abahs* Humiliation, and the Mariners Prayers in *Jonah*, and its like the *Ninivites*; and *Simon Magus* desires to escape punishment: This is not in vain, I cannot say that God is under any

any promise to grant it, but he oft doth grant it, and pity such as cry to him in their misery. Which it seems was the Case described, *Psal.* 78. and 107. And whether *Manassehs* was any better I know not.

2. There is the Prayer of sincere, weak Christians, who are guilty of much weakness of faith, and coldness of desire: These yet through Christ have certain promises of necessary things. 3. There are the fervent and faithful Prayers of Men of eminent faith and holyness; and these oft prevail for extraordinary blessings, which are not promised to the Prayers of every true Christian. *Elias*, and *Elisha*, and *Peter*, did Miracles by Prayer; There are Devils and sins and sufferings that go not out but by fasting and Prayer: The effectual fervent Prayer of an excellent Righteous Man, availeth more than ordinary Christians. If Church history may be Credited, such were the Prayers of *Gregory of Neocæsarea*, *Martin of Tours*, and some other holy Men that prevailed for wonders or Miracles with God. All attain not their success.

III. And I will tell you what grant of Prayers

Prayers you may or may not expect from God. 1. The attaining of Salvation, or our ultimate end, every true Christian doth pray for and shall obtain. 2. The obtaining of all those means which are of absolute necessity to Salvation, every true Christian prayeth for and shall obtain ; such as are our part in the merits and intercession of Christ, the pardon of sin as to the damning punishment, the necessary grace of the Spirit, deliverance from the dominion of sin : These we may be sure of.

3. There be some subordinate means so ordinarily needful, tho not absolutely necessary, that we must pray for them with great earnestness, and may pray for them with great hope, though not with certainty of obtaining them ; such are the use of Bibles, the benefit of a faithful Ministry, Sacraments, Christian Society, time of Preparation for a comfortable death, &c.

4. There are some things which seem better to selfish persons, and to flesh and blood, than indeed they are, and are of very mutable various use ; sometime they are good for us, and at other times hurtful ; to one Man they are good, and to another

another bad: Such are outward prosperity, wealth, honour, ease, health, friends, and Life: God best knoweth both to whom these things are good, and when, and how far, and how long: And because we know not, we cannot tell when, and how far, and to whom, God will give them, when we Pray for them; but we must ask in hope, according to our best understanding, and willingly leave all to the Wisdom and Will of God.

5. There are some things which would be certainly good for us, if we had them which sin maketh us unfit to receive, or as the Scripture speaketh, *unworthy of*, not only in the sense of the Law of works, as all are, but even of the Law of Grace, or Gods ordinary Gospel dispensation: Such are greater measures of grace, and of victory over sin, assistance in duty, and the enjoyment of the best means, and freedom from some Temptations, and afflictions. Guilty culpable Christians of the worst sort, that have less faith, and desire and obedience than better Men, cannot expect that in that condition their Prayers should prevail as much as better; and God should not punish them by any

Cor-

Correction or deny them greater Grace and Glory.

6. A strong Christian who hath before lived by faith, in a holy fruitful life, and overcome the strong Temptations of flattering prosperity, and fetcht most of his daily comforts from the hopes of Heaven, may well expect as with high probability, tho not with absolute certainty, that God should give him in answer to his Prayers, an answerable victory over all the Temptations of adversity, and deliver him from such sufferings as else would be to his greater heart than good.

7. Those that God called to propagate the Gospel by the attestation and Seal of Miracles, had answerable faith and grant of their Prayers.

IV. By thus much you may see, that while Prayer and hope are guided by Gods word of precept and promise, they are far from being in vain: And tho he give us not all that we desire, he giveth us all that we ought to desire absolutely, and all that we should conditionally desire, if we have the condition.

For, 1. Prayer goeth to him that can easily give us whatever we need, without loss, or cost or difficulty: To him
who

who is fuller of goodness than the Sea of water, or the Sun of light: And if the Sun be an intellectual free Agent, it should in reason be no hard matter to believe, that it is willing to give us light.

2. We come not to God before he calleth us: He hath commanded us to ask: It is in his own appointed way and means that we wait for mercy.

3. Sincere Prayer cometh from God, and therefore is acceptable to him: It is his Spirit that giveth us holy desires, and teacheth us what and how to ask; and causeth us to believe and hope for mercy: And God despiseth not his Spirits work: If it cause us but to groan out sincere desires, he knoweth the meaning of them.

4. In Prayer we retire from our selves to God: We exercise Repentance in humble Confession; we acknowledge our insufficiency, emptiness and unworthiness, and so are the fitter, as Beggars to receive the gifts of his free Grace.

5. True Prayer disposeth us to the right use of all that God shall give, and thats the way to obtain our desire. Prayer confesseth sin, and implyeth that

we

we will take heed of sinning for the time to come: It confesseth unworthiness, and therefore implyeth a promise to be thankful: It trusteth to God and seeketh all of him, and therefore implyeth our purpose to live to him and please him.

6. We go to God in the Name of Christ, and have a Mediator whom he heareth always: We plead his worthiness, and that by his own Command.

7. And Prayer hath many promises from God, who is faithful and never brake his promise. *Ask and ye shall have.*

8. Lastly, though we have not all that we would have, yet experience greatly encourageth us to pray, and tells us that Prayer hath prevailed with God.

I know that the Devil and Unbelief have many dissuading Objections.

As 1. That God is not moved by our words, much less by long Prayers.

Ans. But our hearts are moved while just desire is excited and exercised, and thereby made fitter to receive Gods gifts: We pull the Boat to the Shore, and not the Shore to the Boat, when
we

we lay hold on the Shore and pull at it. If this reason were good, all means in the World were vain as well as Prayer: If we do good, and obey God, and forsake Sin, if it were to perfection, all this maketh no change in God: Shall we therefore conclude, that it is in vain, and no means of his acceptance and blessing: Your eating, and drinking, an trading, and plowing, and sowing, and study, and travels, make no change on God: Are they therefore all in vain? and will he give you all that you want without them? Changes are made on the Receiver, not on God.

Obj. 2. God knoweth what we want without our Prayer, and he knoweth our desires.

Ans. What though you know what a Beggar wants, or what your Child wants; will you think him a fit Receiver, who thinks himself too good to ask, or thinks you must give him all without asking? Is it not God himself that hath bid you pray, and are his terms too hard? Have you less need than Christ himself had, who spent whole Nights in Prayer.

Obj. 3. Many live in Prosperity that never

never pray, and many in Adversity that pray.

Ans. Dives, Luke 16. lived in Prosperity, and so did *Herod, Pilate*, and so do many Turks and Heathens: Is Christianity therefore in vain? And will you be contented with the Portion of such men? Go into the Sanctuary and see their end: Are those now in Prosperity who are in Hell with Devils, past help and hope. Prayer is not to make us richer and *greater* in the World than other Men, but to make us better and obtain Salvation. Do you judge of men by their Case in *this World* or the *next*? And are those men prosperous, who are the Slaves of the Flesh, and the World, and the Devil? And are they not better, who are secured of the Love of God?

V. But I will next tell you, what Cause you have of Patience, even when God seemeth to deny your Prayers.

I. It is an unspeakable mercy that he will not deny us any thing that is necessary to our Salvation. Is that man miserable, and should he murmur; who is a Child of God, a Member of Christ, and an Heir of Heaven; and is pardoned,

done, sanctified, and shall be saved? Is there not enough in Christ and Heaven to satisfy you?

2. God gave you Mercy, yea, unvaluable Mercy, before you askt it: He gave you your Being and Reason unaskt: He gave the World a Saviour unaskt: He gave you Christian Parents, Teachers and Books unaskt: And he gave you his first Grace unaskt, and many a Deliverance since: Therefore if he deny you what you ask, it is not because he is backward to give.

3. If it be any outward thing that he denyeth you, bethink you whether God or you be fitter to dispose of such? Have you more Authority and Right? He owed you nothing; if he have given it you long, be thankful for that though it be past; it was freely given. And who is wiser and better knoweth how to use you and all men; Is it God or you? And who is better, or unlikelier to chuse amiss?

And again, remember how great a Sin it is, to grudge at God for his Government of the World, and to desire to depose him, and to dispose of any thing our selves? Is this your subjection and

submission to his Will? Did not Christ by his Examples teach you better? When he said, *Not as I will, but as thou wilt.* And if this Cup may not pass from me unless I drink it, thy Will be done. Mat. 26. 39, 42. Mans Duty, Holiness, Interest and Rest lieth in bringing over his own Will entirely to the Will of God, and his sin and misery in resisting it,

4. Either you are sure that what you ask is best for you, or not: If it be Wealth or Health, you are not sure; more perish by Prosperity than by Adversity: I before told you, that men are condemned for loving somewhat more than God, and Holiness, and Heavens; and preferring it in their choice. And do you think men are liker to over-love Sickness, and Poverty, and Crosses, more than Health, and Wealth, and Pleasure? And would you have God give you that which is worst for you, only because you pray for it, or would have it? You will not do so by your Child, no nor by your Swine, lest she burst his Belly.

But if it be Grace, and that which you are sure is best for you; your first duty

duty is to examin whether there be not some great impediment in your selves, which is the Cause of Gods denial? Do you go to the root of your old sins in your penitent Confession? Do you hide no secret guilt or sin, and deale too gently with it? Do you humble your self to those that you have wronged by word or deed? And do you make full Restitution so far as you are able to all that you have defrauded? Do you not dally with temptation, and wilfully renew your guilt? Do you not overmuch hanker after worldly prosperity or some sinful pleasure? Do you not wilfully omit some certain duty to God or Man, in your relation or converse, and look after none but your self, and live unfruitfully to others, your Children, Servants and Neighbours? If Conscience find such guilt as this, presently endeavour faithfully to amend it, and then beg Gods further Grace, and you shall find him not unwilling to give it you.

But if none of this be the Case, but you have the testimony of your Consciences, that excepting your unwilling imperfections and infirmities, in *simplicity and*

godly sincerity you have your conversation in the World, and endeavour true obedience to Christ; then you may be sure that God hath denied you no Grace essential to Christianity, and necessary to Salvation,

5. And as to increase of Grace and higher measures, remember that even the *desire* of it is an unspeakable mercy; For the desire of perfection is the mark of sincerity, and so of Salvation: Be thankful to God for those desires. But this is the affliction next to be spoken to more distinctly.

CASE. XIV.

Weakness of Grace, Knowledge, Faith, Love, Comfort, Great Corruptions.

XIV. **I**T is one of the greatest burdens to an upright Soul, to be kept under spiritual languishing and weakness, and to have but a low degree of grace: When knowledge is so small that it will not free us from daily uncertainties about Truth, and Duty, and Sin; and all that plead for their several opinions, perplex us; and Scripture seemeth unintelligible to us, and we do but

but grope after God as in the dark, and are overwhelmed with strange unsatisfied thoughts, of God, and of Christ, and of the World which we are going to.

When Faith is so weak, that we trust Christ for Heaven and Earth, with fear, and inquietness, and much distrust; and can scarce tell whether our Faith overcome the World, and our trusting Christ for Heaven would make us forsake Earth and Life, rather than chuse to hazard it by wilful sin; when doubts and fears do tell us that we have little Faith.

What a Calamity is it, when our hopes of Heaven do so little rejoyce us, that every worldly suffering seems strong enough to quell and quench our joy: Yea, we have more dread than desire, more trouble than joy when we think of dying, and of the next Life?

What a Calamity is it, when our Love to God, and Christ, and Glory is so small, that we are in fear that we love more this Body, and wordly Prosperity, and Pleasure? When all the thoughts of Gods essential Goodness,

his Love and mercy to us and others, and all the wonderful Love and Mercy of our Redeemer, and all the Mercies on Earth, and Promises of Heaven, will scarce warm our hearts with Love and thankful joy in God ? And yet we can easily Love and overlove our flesh, our House, our Lands, our friends, and fanciful amourneſs is a Common diſeaſe.

What a Calamity is it that we have no more Government of our thoughts, to keep out Coveteouſneſs, Pride and Luſt, and to caſt out Satans abominable Temptations.

And that when we know that God tryeth us to exerciſe our patience, we can no better overcome fear, anger, grief and diſcontent ? Should we be *Patient* Under all this want of Grace.

Anſw. This is to me the greateſt burden in this World, and I ſuppoſe it is ſo to all ſound Chriſtians, as to conſiderate trouble of mind, tho loſs of friends or bodily pains may ſtir up more paſſion. That which was before ſaid about uncertainty of Salvation, muſt be taken in about this Caſe.

And, 1. Let us make ſure of our *ſincerity* before we talk of our imperfections
if

if we can know that we have the truth of special grace, we may know what to say to the Case of our infirmities. And for that still remember what I said before about the sincerity of faith: *If you have so well thought of this World and the next, and of the Gospel of Christ, that you are soundly resolved to trust Christ for grace and glory, to the forsaking of all that stands against it, you have saving faith and title to Salvation.* I opened it before to you by two similitudes, of a patient that practically trusteth his Physician, and a poor Prisoner that practically trusteth one that promiseth him a Lordship in a Forreign Land: Tho you venture with fear and trembling, if you will venture all on Christ, and leave all for him, so far as he requireth you, it is saving faith. Practically trust him, and he will save you.

2. When you are got thus far, remember that as you were born in sin, so you too long lived in it: Sin had a long time to darken your understandings, and harden your hearts, and corrupt your wills, and set you at a greater distance from God: And do think that all this must be undone and cured easily and in a moment,

or as soon as you desire it? It is an unspeakable mercy that it is so far cured, as that you are translated from death to life, and made new Creatures, and the Heirs of Heaven; And moreover that Christ hath undertaken the perfect cure in his time and way. Grace somewhat imitateth nature: You were not born as soon as Conceived, nor were you at ripe age as soon as born. Your growth and strength came by degrees in time, you had not your *Learning* all at once, but by long Study. You get not your Riches by Trading or labour in a few daies: Your Land brings not fruit to perfection as soon as it is sowed; nor your Trees so soon as they are graft or planted: And must not so great a work as the Cure and Sanctifying of a Soul be done by such degrees?

3. And consider that you must not be meer patients, but also Agents in the increase of your grace and strength: It must be had by exercise; the frequent acts must increase the Habits; and God will not do it all without you: He hath appointed you means to use, and will try and exercise your obedience therein. As he giveth not life and strength to those that

that will not take their food, nor the fruit of the Earth without our labour, so neither hath he promised to give more grace, save in the patient use of the means which he hath appointed. *Time, Means and diligence* are needful.

4. And alas most Christians are too slothful, and use means negligently, and then look, that God should give them as much grace, at their meer wish and Prayer, as if they were laborious and diligent. And too many do venture on sin, and so keep under grace, by careless living.

5. And some unskillfully use means for one sort of grace, when it is another that they most need, and should use the means accordingly. When they should excite and feed their faith and hope and holy Love, by the consideration of Gods truth and goodness, and his Love in Christ, and by Heavenly Doctrine and thoughts endeavour to get a Heavenly mind, some study small controversies, and some perplex themselves with scruples about duties and sins of their own making, and some plunge themselves into confounded and bewildering thoughts, and think over again all Satans Temptations; and some only strive to get a more passionate

weeping sorrow ; And much neglect all
 ferious endeavours for a believing, Lov-
 ing, joyful Soul.

6. You must remember that many
 Christians grow in grace and do not know
 it, but think that they go backward, or
 have none : Because they do not suffici-
 ently observe wherein the nature of
 Sanctification doth principally consist :
 Some lay it on passion, and some on Me-
 mory, and some on the belief of their own
 sincerity, Justification and Salvation,
 and some on words and free expression,
 whereas it chiefly consisteth in the *Esti-
 mation* of the *Judgments*, the *Resolution*
 of the *Will*, and the *Obedience* of our *Lives* :
 If you esteem *Gods Grace and Glory* better,
 and *sin worse*, and the *World* to be *good or
 bad*, as it serveth grace or sin ; then you
 grow in *understanding* : If you are more
 firmly resolved to place your hopes, and
 make your *choice* according to this *estima-
 tion*, and to please God, and secure *Grace
 and Glory*, whatever it cost you, and to
 avoid wilfull sin, which is your danger,
 and to use the *World* for holy ends, e-
 specially if you *Love Wisdom*, and *Hol-
 iness*, and *Justice* better, and hate sin more
 than you did heretofore, then your *Will*
 doth.

doth grow in grace. And if you shew this Will and choice in more *Obedience of Life*, avoiding known sin more, and endeavouring to do good, and devoting your selves more entirely to God, then you grow in holyness of Life: Tho your memories grow weaker, and tho your holy passions and feelings should grow less, and are less able for long Meditation, or to keep an order or steadiness in your thoughts, and tho you want words in Prayer and discourse, and tho fears and peevish angryness and troubling thoughts should by weakness or Temptation get more advantage of you, yet all this stands with rootedness and growth in grace.

7. Forget not what you were heretofore: Had you not formerly a higher esteem of worldly things, and less fear of sinning than you have now. Growth in Grace may be like the growth of your Trees, or Corn, or Flowers, or the shadow on your Dial: You do not see these grow or move: But if you come after a sufficient time, you may see that they are grown: We are Bigger at Age than in Child-hood, and yet we never saw our selves grow? It is by insensible degrees: Strong Christians, have more know-

knowledge, then they had, and a more fixed resolution for God and Heaven, and a greater contempt of Worldly vanity, and Victory over fleshly desires and wilfull sin, tho they perceive not how these grow.

8. Be thankful that you desire to be better : Those desires (as is aforesaid) prove sincerity, and are the Earnests of what you do desire, and are a greater blessing than all the Riches of the World : God that gave them you will not see them lost : The grace which we have on Earth is *desiring seeking grace* ; desires are our best Evidence here ; *Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after Righteousness* ; for they shall be satisfied hereafter. We must know the difference between Earth and Heaven : Its there that we shall have all that we desire. Here *desiring and seeking* is our work : Perfection is the prize and Crown : Which is not to be had till we have done our Race and Warfare : The Womb is but the place of preparation for what is to be enjoyed in the open World ; and no great matters are there to be expected : We must not look for more on Earth, than its part.

9. And when all is done God is a free Agent,

Agent, and giveth his grace in such variety as he please, and doth not give to all alike: As he freely diversifieth *Nature* and Common gifts, so doth he several degrees of grace. It is an unspeakable mercy to have so much as shall save us from the Hell which we deserve, and give us right to life Eternal; tho we yet are faint through weakness, and have not the strength and comfort which we desire.

10. And tho we have yet much Corruption left uncured; we have helps appointed us to overcome them: And the exercise of Grace against all such Enemies, is much of its glory, and sheweth its amiable worth, as darkness sets out the worth of light, and sickness of health, and death of life: Diseases occasion the Honour of our Physician: Where sin hath abounded, grace hath superabounded: The whole need not the Physician: We must have daily use for Christ, both to pardon us, and to cure us: God could have prevented *Adams* fall; but he hath permitted it, and permiteth all the sin in the World, tho he cause it not: And he knoweth how to use it to his glory. All Souls in Heaven were
once

once sinful, saving Christs: We must daily be washed in his blood; we shall never perform a duty so innocently as to need no Saviour and pardoning grace: where there is is no Enemy there is no War: And where there is no War there is no victory; and where there is no Victory there is no Tryumph.

11. And that God who freely pardon'd all our Reigning sins before Conversion, will surely pardon all our meer infirmities, when we renew our faith and our Repentance: He that through Christ can forgive such as were Enemies, will forgive a Son: And being reconciled by Christs death, we shall be saved by his life.

Not that any of these Considerations should reconcile us to sin, or abate our hatred of it: It must be our grief that any thing should cleave to us which is hateful to God, and which killed Christ, and which is so contrary to holyness and Heaven: But use no such impatience as hindereth the sense of the Love of God, or the grace of Christ, or the thankful acknowledgment of his mercy: Fight against sin as well as you can, and serve your Lord as well as you are able: But do not sit down and cry, because sin is too strong.

Wrong for you, and because you can serve God no better ; complain to Christ in order to beg his help and grace : But use not complaint instead of endeavour, nor any trouble which hindereth duty.

Thank God that you are weary of sin, and say with *Paul*, *O wretched Man*, who *shall deliver me*, so you will but say next, [*I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord ;*] And now you are weary and heavy laden, come to Christ for ease and rest. And Remember that (if you were ungodly) you could once have endured sin without weariness ? Who heard you then impatiently cry out against it : Yea you were loath to think of leaving it. And look about you on the multitude of the ungodly, and you shall see how far they are from being impatient with their sin, tho it be mortal ; when they can scarce be patient towards him that would but save them from it. They grudge, at God because he will not give them leave to sin, and not because he doth not Cure them : O how contrary is the impatience of Saints and wicked sinners.

12. While you remember what grace you want, remember also both what you have received, and what is promised you.
That

that *Thankfulness* and *Hope* may keep you from discouragement. You are not cured, but you are alive; and Christ hath promised you a Cure. In many things we all offend, *Jam. 2. 2.* He that saith he hath no sin is a *Liar.* *1 John 1. 8.* Paul tells us that he had not obtained perfection, but he rejoiced that he was pressing towards the mark. *Phil. 3. 12, 13.* We may rejoyce that our Captain hath overcome the World, *John 16. 33.* And he will shortly bruise Satan under our feet. *Rom. 16. 20.* and 7. last. Christ that cured all bodily diseases on Earth, will cure spiritual blindness, lameness, and deadness too, if we have but grace enough to go to him for more.

13. Lastly, the more weary you are of sin and weakness, and the more desirous you are to know God better, and love him more, and praise him with greater chearfulness and joy, the more you should long to be with Christ: Heaven will deliver you from all imperfection; from all darkness, unbelief and dulness; from all sad uncomfortable thoughts, and from all both alluring and molesting temptations: O that we could believe that more strongly, and then our honest
im-

impatience with sin and imperfection, would but quicken us to the means of our deliverance, and help our joy in the foresight of that blessed change, which will leave no matter of discontent, and will give us more than we could here desire.

But to those who are overmuch dejected at their imperfections and remaining faults, I add these Cautions.

1. See that it be not the disgrace, or the outward troublesome fruits of your sin, which grieve you more than the sin it self.

2. Take heed, lest while you complain of your badness, there be no secret pride and hypocrisie, to make you angry with those that think you but as bad as you call your self: Its an odd kind of contradiction, at once to be impatient because we are so bad, and also impatient with them that take us to be so; and not to endure another to say that of us which we say our selves.

3. The worse you take your selves and your sins to be, the more you should esteem, and desire a Saviour and his Grace to heal you, and rejoyce that a full remedy is at hand, and freely offered you; and be
the

the more thankful for that mercy which is given, and which is promised to so unworthy Sinners.

4. Shew your impatience with sin and wants by hating sin, and diligent using the means of cure, and not by idle discouraged despairing complaints.

5. Remember that our Head is perfect for us; His Merits and Righteousness are perfect; He is fully perfected in Glory; and is it nothing that he is related to us, as our Surety, Saviour, and Head? He hath his glory for our good.

6. Remember that no sin or imperfection shall condemn us, but that which we had rather keep than leave, and love more than we hate it: And that all things are tollerable which will end in Heaven. We groan, being burdened both with sin and sorrow in the Flesh: But we wait for full deliverance from the bondage of corruption, into the glorious liberty of the Sons of God.

CASE XV.

When God doth not bless the labours of our Callings, Ministers, Parents endeavours for Children, for near Relations, Tradesmen, endeavours for the Church.

A Nother Case which greatly needeth Patience, is, when God doth not bless and prosper our endeavours; when Ministers study, and preach and pray, and yet see but small fruit of their labours; few converted, reformed, or strengthened, but all their labour seemeth lost: When Parents take pains with their Children, and they remain still obstinate and wicked: When Magistrates endeavours are frustrated by a contentious rebellious people: When men labour in their lawful Callings, and all goeth backward, and God seemeth not to bless their labours: In sickness our Physick doth not prosper: When we are falsely accused, our just defence is not believed: When we endeavour the publick good, we prosper not; This maketh men fear that God forsaketh them.

These several Cases should be severally con-

considered: And the Case of unprosperous Ministers, I confess, is very sad: When a man from his youth is devoted to that holy work, and by many years hard study prepared for it, and is drawn to it by a longing desire to do good, and studyeth for it all his life, and spendstime and strength in constant labour, and after all can see small fruit; this lyeth heavy, and tempteth them to doubt whether they were called of God, and whether they are not unfit for the work, or unfaithful in it. Through Gods great mercy it is not my own tryal; I know not that ever I laboured any where in vain; but I have lived near far better men, who have lived to above fourscore years of Age, and have said, that they know not of two Souls converted by them in the Parishes where they lived; some speed better upon such as came from other Parishes, and some on very few at all: And alas to see no better fruit of such employment, than barely to have a Benefice to live on, and some reverence from the people, or a few good words, is a poor encouragement,

But 1. The first thing to be done in
this

this sad Case, is, to search whether the
 fault be not in our selves? Whether we
 choose such subjects to preach on as are
 most needful and suitable to the Hearers
 state, and fittest to convince and win
 them? Whether we study plainness, and
 familiar words, and a close convincing
 way of speech? Whether by familiar
 conversation with them we get their
 love, and also find out their ignorance,
 error and sin, their objections and doubts,
 that we may know what they need;
 and whether we deal with them private-
 ly and personally as well as publicly, for
 their instruction? Whether our Lives
 preach to them as well as our Tongues,
 and shew them that we believe what we
 speak? and whether we do all in the ex-
 pression of unfeigned love, and do them
 all the good we can for their Bodies, and
 quarrel not with them for worldly things,
 but lose our right rather than scandalize
 them, and harden them against the
 Truth. If any of this be amiss, it must
 be amended; if not, then consider,

2. That to labour is our parts, and
 to prosper it is Gods: *Paul* and *Apollos*
 can but plant and water, but it is God
 that must give the increase: Christ him-
 self

self both preached and wrought miracles in some places, when yet few believed on him; yea, though the people cryed him up, it was no great number that were thoroughly converted by all his preaching and works; that being reserved for the coming down of the Holy Ghost, after his Death and Resurrection. And in some places few were converted by the Apostles, even among the learned Philosophers at *Athens*, how little was their success?

3. God knoweth his Chosen, and all shall come to Christ that the Father hath given him, and none of them shall be lost: And God loveth Souls and Holiness better than we do: All Souls are his; and Christ knoweth the price of them: And we know that all that God doth is good, and we shall see the reason of it at last.

The Prophets and Apostles had more unthankful requitals, than the meer loss of their labour with the greater part; They were also persecuted, scorned, and killed, by them whose Salvation they desired: Which of the Prophets have not your Fathers killed and persecuted, saith Christ, *Mat. 23*, see *Isa. 53. 1.*
 &c.

&c. *John 12. 37, 38. Acts 17. and 19. 9. and 28. 24. Yea, to some the Word is the savour of Death to Death, and Christ is as a Stone of stumbling, and Ministers as the scorn of the World and the off scouring of all things; and alas, they must be Witnesses against their Hearers to their Condemnation, and must shake off the Dust of their Feet against them.*

4. If our success were according to our own desires, it would be beyond what God intendeth for men in the World: We would have every man in this world converted and saved: It is our duty to desire and endeavour it as far as we are able; for it is not Gods Decrees but his Commands which are our Rule. *Luke 4. 25. Many Widdows, saith Christ, were in the days of Eliza, but it was not to many that he was sent. We may have comfort in our just desires and endeavours.*

6. God will accept and reward us, according to our faithful work, and not according to our success: A bad man may be used to save other mens Souls, when his own is lost. *Isa 49. 5. Though Israel be not gathered, yet shall I be glorious in the Eyes of the Lord, and my God shall be*

be my strength. It is spoken both of the Prophet and of Christ : It was to the *lost sheep of the house of Israel*, that Christ saith he was sent; and he is called, a *Minister of the Circumcision*. And yet *Israel* was not gathered, when he would have gathered them as a Hen doth her Chickens, *Mat. 23*. But they were to be utterly ruined for rejecting him, *2 Cor. 2. 14, 15*. Now thanks be to God who causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savour of his Knowledge by us in every place : For we are unto God a sweet savour of Christ in them that are saved and in them that perish : To the one the savour of Death to Death, and to the other the savour of Life unto Life; and who is sufficient for these things. Faithful labour is never wholly lost.

7. And one Soul is so precious, as is worth more than all the labour of our lives : He is an Hypocrite himself and no faithful Minister of Christ, that had not rather save one Soul though he live in poverty, than have the richest Bishoprick and save none. His Mony shall perish with him, who loveth Mony better than the Soul of the poorest Beggar.

8. There may perhaps be many more
Souls

Souls converted than the Preacher ever hearth of. The work hath often obscure beginnings: You know not what workings may be in the secret hearts of Sinners; and some are bashful, and some have not opportunity to shew themselves. I have visited some aged Women before Death, who were not noted for any zealous profession of Religion, but what they shewed in the Church Assemblies, and I found them of solid understanding and experience; and perceived by their talk that they had been constant in all secret duties, and conscionable in all their course: And when I enquired further, I found that they had Husbands that restrained them from the society of godly people, and from all open manifestation of what was in their hearts, save what their Church-worship, and upright living shewed. And this is the Case of some Children and Servants, who are under the restraint of bad Parents and Masters: We must not then conclude, that all the Seed is lost, which seemeth buried and appeareth not to us.

9. It is not lost labour which doth but restrain men from being worse:

L

The

The suppression of Vice, and the keeping up a profession of the Truth, is worth all our labour ; as also the keeping out Heresies and Errors ; and it is worth our labour to feed Christs Sheep, and help to confirm such as are true Christians already, and to increase the grace they have ; and to comfort the sad, and resolve the doubting, and edifie the Body of Christ: Surely the work which is to be done in guiding and edifying the Converted, requireth as great skill at least, as that which is required to the converting of Infidels and wicked men ; (though the change made on the Learners be not so great in regard of the *terminus a quo* ; for the higher includeth the lower and more) and more Learning is necessary to teach the higher Form, than to teach the Alphabet: Some are for planting, and some for watering ; some went forth to make Disciples of the Nations, and baptize them, and some were to guide them when baptized, and teach them to observe all Christs Commands.

10. If your Study and Doctrine edifie and save your selves, it is an unspeakable mercy ; you have had the comfort of sweet
and

and holy studies, and the pleasant work of opening and pleading saving truth : And if all this study and preaching have but prevailed with your selves, and conquered your own sins, and subdued your Souls to the obedience of Christ, how happy are you : Yet all this is not said to make you indifferent as to your success : I further therefore advise you :
 1. Long for the winning and edifying of Souls ; for I have observed, that few prosper this way, but those that earnestly desire it.

2. Pray hard for them to God, and see that you neglect not your own Duty. Study for eminent abilities : Preach plainly, earnestly, reverently ; exhort them personally ; do them good charitably ; hurt none ; avoid scandal ; live as you teach ; shun all unnecessary crossness and singularity ; *keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace with all true Believers* ; and patiently leave the issue to God.

3. If you are distasted through per-
 judice, and have long laboured without any notable success, advise with your Brethren whether you should not remove, and another be not fitter for that people,

and you for another, and do accordingly.

II. As to the second Cause of the frustration of all endeavours for the Souls of Children and Servants, I toucht it before: I confesse it is a grievous Case to bring up Children who will be Slaves of Satan, Plagues to the Church, and Fire-brands in Hell; and to speak to them in vain as to Blocks or Mad-men: But good men have lived comfortably that had bad Children: *Adam* had a *Cain*, *Noah* had a *Cham*, *Abraham* had an *Ismael*, *Isaack* had an *Esau*, *Jacob's* Sons greatly sinned; *Eli* had an *Hophni* and *Phinehas*, *Samuel's* Sons forsook their Fathers way; *David* had an *Amnon* and an *Abshalom*, *Solomon* had a *Rehoboam*, *Hezekiab* had a *Manasseh*, *Job* justly feared his Sons forgetting God in their fulness, and lost them in it: Christ saith the Son shall be against the Father, *Mat. 13. 12.*

And if you have but one good Child, you owe great thanks to God for that. If a Minister must not deny God his thanks, nor himself his comforts, though most of his Flock prove obstinate and perish; neither must Parents be unthank-

g.
he
he
I
ie-
ho
he
to
or
ed
n :
m ,
an,
an
or-
an
d a
Job
in
rift
er,
ld,
at.
his
gh
nd
an-
nk-

g.
he
he
I
ie-
ho
he
to
or
ed
n :
m ,
an,
an
or-
an
d a
Job
in
rift
er,
ld,
at.
his
gh
nd
an-
nk-

g.
he
he
I
ie-
ho
he
to
or
ed
n :
m ,
an,
an
or-
an
d a
Job
in
rift
er,
ld,
at.
his
gh
nd
an-
nk-

sinful choice, which must be repented of:
And its a mercy that your Repentance
hath some help.

2. It may be such a constant exercise of
your grace, especially patience and pru-
dence, as may render you better and
stronger Christians, than those that have
less exercise by tryals.

3. The greatness of the Temptations
must cause you to double your watchful-
ness and resolutions, against the sins
which you will be tempted to, and to per-
form all the duties of our place. As
1. See that no pretence of Love, or pleas-
ing, or obedience, draw you to imitate
a Husband or a Wife in sin, and to be-
come as bad as they, or to receive any er-
rour from them, or grow cold to holy
duties. Some Women that have Papists
or other Erroneous Husbands, cannot
tell how to Love and please them, with-
out being flattered or drawn into their
Errours, strong constant tryals need
strong and constant watch and resoluti-
on: For if you are overcome to be as
they, its a thousand times worse than all
the grief that you have by them.

2. See that their badness destroy not
Conjugal affections towards them: Those
may

may be loved as Husbands or Wives who cannot be loved as sincere Christians.

3. See that you exceed meer carnal persons in all the duties of your Relations. If your difference and grief do cast you into sowerness, and an unpleasant discontented conversation, or if you be as peevish and froward as common persons, you will be a scandal to those that you should win, and drive them further from Religion and Salvation. You must shew if you are Wives more Love, and Meekness, and Patience, and Obedience than Carnal persons do, as well as more forwardness in Religion. Froward Impatient Wives do harden many ill Husbands in their sin. It hath much pleased me to hear a Husbands saying of a good Wife, [*I differ from my Wife in Religion and Church Orders : I go to one Church, and she to another : I think she is too precise and strict ; but I think there is not a better Wife, a better Mother, and a better Mistress in the Land.*] A good Christian must be good in all Relations.

4. Continue Prayers and winning endeavours while there is hope.

5. And let the sense of anothers sin

and misery, provoke you to be thankful to God for his grace, and that he hath not left you to the like.

IV. And as to the next Case (when God blasteth our Labours and Estates, and prospereth not our Callings) its an usual tryal : Some are ruined by deceivers , and breaking Tradsmen , some by losses at Sea ; some by Suretiship ; some by fire ; some by false Servants ; some by Prodigal Sons ; some by Soldiers ; some by unjust Suits at Law ; some over reacht in bargains about Land ; and divers other wayes there are by which the Rich have been brought to poverty (to say nothing of Gaming, Luxury and such vice, which belongs not to this present Case) and by which lawful means of living want success.

And here 1. It is your duty to see that there be no guilt of any other unpardoned sin which God punisheth this way. Sometime an Estate is blasted by God, because it was unlawfully got by Ancestors : Sometimes the owner is guilty of former defrauding others, and hath made no restitution ; Sometimes God thus punisheth some other secret sin, as Fornication , Lying , Flesh-pleasing and such

such like. Search deep, and see that no such guilt be unrepented of, and be as a moth or fire to consume your wealth.

2. Especially search lest your hearts grow secretly into a Worldly disposition, and too great hopes of Riches and prosperity, and too great a desire after plenty, and too much pleasure in the possession or the hopes of it : If this be your case, its Gods great mercy to blast all to you, and to break your Idol, and to fire you out of the Garrison that you trust. They that *trust* in riches, Christ tells you, are as hardly saved as for a *Camel* (or Gable) to go through the eye of a needle : And its Mens *hope*, which is called their *trust*. When you *hope* for more from Riches than they can give, you are said to *trust* in them. If ever God save you, he will save you from this Worldly mind and love : And sure prosperity is not the likeliest way to that ; but rather withering the object of your hopes.

3. However make this use of your crosses, to be more weaned from the World, and more carefully to lay up a Treasure in Heaven, where fire, rust or moth corrupts not, and Thieves, Pirate

or Soldiers cannot steal, and then your loss, be it never so great, is made your gain.

4. And let your crosses and frustrations call you to exercise the graces suitable to your condition ; to renew Repentance , submission to Gods Will , Prayer and dependance for your daily bread , abatement of Pride , not disdain- ing the lowest employment , nor to be beholden to others : And if you can follow Christ and his Apostles in a holy poverty , you shall quickly be above contempt and want. And let it make you ply that Calling and work which will never disappoint you : Believe and hope strongly , pray earnestly , obey diligently , be steadfast , unmovable always abounding in the work of the Lord , forasmuch as your labour shall not be in vain , tho all your Worldly wealth be blasted.

V. The last Case is the saddest tryal of all , when just endeavours for Church and State , for Societies and Posterity seem all in vain : When hopes of peace and piety and publick good have been high raised , and all soon blasted and turned into shame. But of this I must speak

speak anon. I conclude all this Case
 of *Labour frustrate, and hopes cast down,*
 with this necessary warning; Judge of
 Gods love to you by the great and sure
 tokens of his Love, and not by uncer-
 tain transitory things : If God loved
 those best that prosper most in honour
 and wealth, *Turks* and Tyrants, and
 the most Luxurious wicked Men, would
 have the best proof of his Love. If
 your Souls prosper in increase of faith,
 and in sweeter or desiring thoughts of
 Heaven, and in delight in God and ho-
 linefs, and in victory over all your car-
 nal affections, and discontents, and in
 a more willing obedience to all Gods
 Laws, and in a word, in a fuller com-
 pliance of your Wills to the Will of God,
 then you are truly prosperous persons,
 and have the certain tokens of the Love
 of God; when the prosperity of fools
 will destroy them, and turn to the in-
 crease of their sin, and will but be as
 fuel to Hell fire, and prepare for end-
 less misery.

CASE XVI.

*The Common sin and misery of the World,
and fervency of wise and Godly Men.*

XVI. **A** Heavier tryal of our faith and patience yet is, *The misery of this World by the universal corruption of Mankind, the prevalency of most odious wickedness, and paucity of wise and godly Men : That at five thousand, six hundred and eighty two years, after the Creation, most of the Earth seemeth forsaken of God : Five parts of six being Heathens, Mahometans and Infidels ; and of the sixth part the far greatest parts are Papists, and lamentable ignorant Greeks, Armenians, Abassines, Jacobites, Nestorians, &c. And of the Protestants, so few that so much as seem to be serious practicers of the Christian faith and hope, but most live in worldlyness, sensuality, if not also in enmity to serious piety, and Persecution of all that practice what themselves profess.*

This is a manifold and grievous tryal.
1. To our faith ; While Satan taketh advantage by it to make us doubt whether Man was made for another life,
when

when his nature seemeth to have no inclination to it, but rather to abhor it: And to doubt how Christ is the Saviour of the World, and dyed for all, and would have all to be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth, when so few do so much as hear his Gospel. 2. Its a great tryal to our Charity, to think that so few of the World shall be saved, and so many Kingdoms and Ages damned; when we can our selves scarce bear the pain of the Stone or Chollick patiently, or the miscarriage or misery of a Child or friend. And it maketh it the harder to us to perceive the Goodness, Love and Amiability of God, who can convert and save the World, and will not.

I have answered all this so fully in a little Book called, *The Vindication of Gods Love*, that to avoid Repetition, I will say but this little following.

1. We are fully certain of Gods perfect goodness, by all his works; it being equal to his greatness: And therefore no Argument can be of force against a certain truth: Nothing can be true that is inconsistent with so sure and great a truth.

2. Gods goodness is infinite in act, in
his

his blessed *self-love*: No finite Creature is an object fit to demonstrate infinite Love in perfect act, nor capable of it.

3. It is certain *de facto* that God doth make Toads, Serpents, dung, and puts sensitive nature in Men and Bruits to great pains and death: Therefore it is certain that all this is consistent with Gods perfect goodness.

4. Gods Love to his Creature is his *Beneficence* or *Complacence*. He was no way bound to make all Creatures equal, nor to give as much to a fly or flea as to a Man, nor to a Man as to an Angel, or to the Sun: Nor is it meet that he complacentially esteem any Creature better than it is.

5. It was no way unmeet that God should make a middle rank of active natures between necessitated bruits and Immutable confirmed Spirits, even a rank of intellectual free Agents to be Governed Morally by Laws, in a life of tryal, with a power of self-determining as to their *Wills*, and to leave them to their undetermined choice, decreeing accordingly to Judge them; yet resolving to secure the Salvation of some. If it be not against Gods goodness to make
Bruits

Bruits that have no intellects nor capacity of glory, its not contrary to it to make *Intellectuals* meerly capable, and leave them to their free wills.

6. While we are thankful for Gods mercies to his peculiar people, the Church, we must not, as some peevishly and rashly do, deny what he doth for the rest of the World. He useth them not according to the terms of the first Law, *In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt die: He leaveth not himself without witness while he winketh at their ignorance,* ACT. 14. In that he giveth them abundance of Temporal mercies, fruitful Lands and seasons, health and time, and punisheth them not as they deserve: So that, *that which may be known of God is manifest in them, for God hath shewed it to them: For the invisible things of him from the Creation of the World are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his Eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse, because when they knew God they glorified him not as God.* Rom. 1. 19, 20, 21. *Who hath made of one blood all Nations of Men, to dwell on all the face of the Earth, and hath determined the times before appointed and the bounds of their Habitation,*

bitation, that they should seek the Lord, if
 happily they might feel after him and find
 him, tho he be not far from every one of us.
 Act 17. 25, 26, 27. And in every Nation
 he that feareth God and worketh righteous-
 ness is accepted of him; for he is no respecter
 of Persons, Act. 10. He that cometh to God
 must believe that he is, and that he is a Re-
 warder of them that diligently seek him: And
 Noah that believed the warning of God,
 and prepared the Ark, being moved by fear,
 became an heir of the Righteousness of Faith,
 Heb. 11. 6, 7. God will render to every Man
 according to his deeds: To them who by
 patient continuance in well doing do seek for
 glory, and honour, and immortality, Eternal
 life: But unto them that are contentious, and
 do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness,
 indignation and wrath; tribulation and an-
 guish to every Soul of Man that doth evil,
 of the Jew first and also of the Gentile: But
 Glory, honour and peace to every Man that
 worketh good, to the Jew first and also to
 the Gentiles: For there is no respect of persons
 with God: For as many as have sinned with-
 out Law, shall also perish without Law, and
 as many as have sinned in the Law, shall be
 judged by the Law: For not the bearers of
 the Law are just before God, but the doers
 of

of the Law shall be justified: For when the Gentiles which have not the Law, do by Nature the things contained in the Law; these having not the Law, are a Law unto themselves, which shew the work of the Law written in their Hearts, their Conscience also bearing witness; and their thoughts the mean while, either accusing or else excusing one another; in the day when God shall judge the secrets of men according to my Gospel. Rom. 2.

The World is not left in despair as Devils, under the sentence of the broken Law of Innocence, but is under the edition of the Law of Grace which was made to Adam and Noah, and is used on terms of Mercy and Forgiveness, or else they should not receive all the Mercies as they do: They are all obliged to repent in hope, and to use some means for recovery and Salvation: And God under the Law proclaimeth himself to be The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long suffering and abundant in Goodness and Truth, keeping Mercy for thousands, forgiving Iniquity, Transgression and Sin, and that will by no means clear, &c. Exod. 34. 5, 6, 7. God would be no otherwise known to any men on Earth.

And

And how far men keep or breake this Law of Grace, their Judge best knoweth: But we know that they shall be judged according to the Law that they are under, and the measure of Talents delivered to them: To whom much is given, of them much is required: *Melchizedeck* was King of *Jerusalem*, even of Righteousness and Peace: And *Job* and his Friends seem to have been great men of several Countries: In *Nineve* they believed God, proclaimed a fast; and God saw their works, that they turned from their evil ways, and God repented of the evil, &c. *Jon. 3. Mil. 1. 11.* From the rising of the Sun to the going down of the same, my Name (shall be, or is) great among the Gentiles, and in every place Incense (shall be or is) offered to my Name, and a pure Offering: For my Name (shall be or is) great among the Heathens, saith the Lord of Hosts.

John and *Christ* preached Repentance and Remission of Sin, before they preached that *Jesus* was the *Christ*: And the very Apostles that dwelt with *Christ* and followed him, did not believe till after his Resurrection, that must be crucified and dye for our sins, and rise again, and ascend and intercede in Heaven,

ven, &c. They were Fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the Prophets had spoken, how that Christ ought to suffer such things, and so to enter into his Glory. *Luke 24.*

We are too like the Jews, who were so proud of their Peculiarity, that they deceitfully took their outward Privileges to signifie much more for them than they did: As if all the rest of the World had been quite forsaken and were no people of God, because they had not their Covenant of Peculiarity: When as indeed their Peculiarity was mostly typical, in that they were a Type of the Peculiar Catholick Church under the Gospel, and that Christ was to be a Jew according to the Flesh: Even as their Law and the righteousness of it was excellent as typical, and as a School-master to lead us to Christ, though it was called *faulty*, and was to be *done away*, that a better Covenant might take place. God promised *Abraham* temporal greatness, *viz.* that his Seed should be as the Starrs of Heaven, and he should have a Land that flowed with Milk and Hony: And all this was made good: But in such good as this, how small

small was the Portion of the Israelites? How small and poor their Land and Kings, in comparison of the Romans, Turks, Chinenfes, Indians, &c. The whole Land of the twelve Tribes, not so big as *England*; and they lived most in vexation or Captivity by the Philistines or others, till *David* conquered, and *Solomon* reigned in Peace and Luxury; and no longer did *David's* Line reign over any more than two of the twelve Tribes, and those ere long went into Captivity: So that the glory of the Jews Kingdom was the Divinity of their typical Law, and that the *Messiah* and the Original of the Gospel Church was to spring from them.

And as to their goodness, all the History and Prophets tell us how bad they were; and if the lives of most of their Kings be compared with *Alexander Severus*, *M. Aurelius Antonine Philof.* and *Anton. Pius*, and *Trajan*, and *Titus*, &c. there will no great cause appear to think that none but Jews could be saved: the pride of their Peculiar Covenant set them at a greater distance from all others than their real greatness, wisdom or goodness did.

Rom.

Rom. 3. 1, 2. *What advantage then hath the Jew, and what profit is there of Circumcision? Much every way; Chiefly because to them were committed the Oracles of God: And the Christian Church hath now the said Oracles and the Covenant of Peculiarity in a more excellent kind than ever the Jews had: But let us not follow them in our Pride, lest we follow them in Destruction; for if we be worse than others, we shall suffer more than others, as our light was greater. Though we only are the Church and the peculiar People, the rest of Mankind are part of the Kingdom of the Redeemer, who dyed, rose and revived, to this end, that he might be Lord of the Dead and the Living, Rom. 14. 9; 10. For all Power is given him in Heaven and Earth, and he is Head over all to the Church. Mat. 28. 19. Eph. 1. 22, 23. And our Covenant of Peculiarity, is no repeal of the old Law of Grace made to Mankind in Adam and Noah by God the Redeemer, who ruleth all upon terms of Mercy or Grace; and was known accordingly as a merciful pardoning God, before he was Incarnate or known as such: And so is still known, when as Incarnate he is not known;*

known: And it is past doubt, that as much of his Grace and Mercy of Redemption went before his Incarnation, so much of it still extendeth further than the knowledge of his Incarnation; as the Light of the Sun is not utterly gone, when Clouds keep it unseen, and before it riseth, and after it is set.

And as to the Question, *How many among the uncalled World do fear God and work Righteousness, and are accepted of him? Who art thou that judgest anothers Servant; to his own Master he stands or falls?* Only I repeat, that *Abraham* the Father of the Faithful, who saw *Christs day*, thought that there had been *fifty righteous persons in Sodom*; a City so bad, that fire from Heaven must consume it. And all History tells us, that in all Countries there are pious virtuous persons, who are hated and derided by the sensual Herd, yea, and persecuted in most places.

This much I think needful to be considered, that we wrong not God, and our selves, and others, by clouding his Mercy and Goodness, and making difficulties to our Faith and Love.

7. And again, and again, I repeat, that no man is fit to judge diminutively
of

of Gods Mercy and Love, who knoweth not what he saith; (and yet speaketh against a certain truth) But they that say, more are damned than are glorified, know not what they say: For it is visible, that all the Earth is to the rest of the World, no bigger than an Inch to all *England*, that I say not, to all the Earth: And we see that each Region hath Inhabitants connatural here below (Water, Earth, Air) Add we see that the superior Regions are most glorious as well as vast: And I think, that few men of sense do think, that Sun, Moon and Starrs, and all the Orbs, are made for no higher use than to shine upon, or serve this dirty World of Earth: So that again I say, that Hell is like the Gallows, and Earth like the Goal, to a whole Kingdom or vast Empire: And its no sign of a bad Prince, to have one Gallows and one Goal in his Dominions.

8. And we must remember that though *Hell* be but one word, it signifieth divers degrees of Punishment; and Christ who best knew, tells us, that they who *knew not their Lords Will*, shall be *beaten with few stripes*: And even to *Sodom in the Day of Judgment* it shall be
easier

easier than to those that refused the Gospel: And it is an airy active life of misery that the Devils themselves have now.

9. And we see by the pain and death of Bruits, that God doth lay such pain and death on them without desert by any sin: And is it any diminution of his Goodness to lay more on sinful man? All confess that he might have killed and annihilated us without our sin: He that gave a man Life freely for thirty, fifty, sixty years, was not bound to continue it for ever. And he that made Toads and Snakes might have made us such; and yet it is certain, that most men had rather endure any tolerable degree of pain, than either to be annihilated or made Toads or Snakes: And we cannot certainly tell how far those pains may be called *tollerable*, which Christ calleth by the name of *easier*, and *few stripes*.

10. It is most certain that when we come to Heaven, we shall be fully reconciled to all Gods dealings, and rejoyce in the glory of his Holiness and Justice, and see no cause to think diminutively of his Goodness and his Grace.

11. And

11. And in the meantime, let us rejoyce that he hath made us Vessels of Mercy, and that he hath endued so many thousands on Earth with his Grace, and that the heavenly Church is so great and glorious: There will be no want of number there.

12. And as to the Temptations hence to unbelief consider, that the heavenly hopes, and desires, and lives of all the Godly, do prove that God intendeth them for Heaven: All the work of his sanctifying Spirit is not delusion: and the fear and hope that human nature hath of another life, doth shew that we have another to expect: And that the wicked have no such heavenly desire, doth but shew, that they are incapable of heavenly felicity, but not that all others are so too.

CASE XVII.

The sad distempers and divisions of Christians, and the hurt they do to the World, and to one another, and the dishonourable state of the Church.

XVII. **A** Nother exercise of our Patience is, *The great Imperfection,*
M Scan-

Scandals and Divisions of Christians, and the hurt they do to one another, and to the World, and the dishonourable broken state that they are in.

It is a doleful Case to think, how narrow, and low, and corrupt a state the Church was in for four thousand years before Christs Incarnation : How small it was for the the two first Centuries : How quickly shameful Heresies did corrupt it : How lamentably they multiplied even under Persecution : How quickly the advanced enriched Clergy were corrupted : What odious Schisms they made in the Church : How they grieved the hearts of peaceable Princes, who with all their Power, were unable to keep even common Love and Peace among the Prelates, and to get them to live but as quietly with each other as the Heathen did. What a shame is it to think, how the Majority carried it in their most famous Councils ? And into how many Sects the Church was broken, and most of them by Bishops continued to this day ? Greeks, Moscovites, Armenians, Nestorians, Jacobites, Melchites, Papists, &c. And that so many hundred years experience doth not end or heal their

the rents. To read the doleful Divisions and Cruelties by the Arrians, the bloody Feuds about Nestorians, Euty-chians, Monothelites, the *Tria Capitula*, Images. Excommunications, particular mens striving for pre-eminence, to read how the Papacy sprang up, and to read the Schisms and Lives of the Popes, the general Councils dismal Accusations of some of them, their Ignorance, Simony and Wickedness: To read of the Wars between the Pope and Emperors, *Fredericks, Henry the 4th. Henry the 5th. Otto, &c.* And how commonly the Clergy swore, and unswore, and forswore; sometime for the Pope, and sometime for the Emperors: To read how a Council of Bishops made it the *Henrician Heresie* to hold that Emperors have a Power to invest Bishops *baculo & annulo*, and that the Pope may not excommunicate and depose them; and that they were to dig up the Carcasses of the dead Bishops and burn them as *Henrician Heretics*, who had been for the Emperors against the Popes: To read of all the horrid cruelties of Bishops and Clergy-men, in Inquisitions, the Murder of many hundred thousand Waldenses and Albigenses, and the

many Massacres and Burnings for Religion since : To see at this day, that the Clergy will not by reason or request, be intreated to give one another, or the Kingdoms of *Europe* any peace : What clamors ! What Preachings ! What Writings ! What Railings ! What diabolical Slanders, and malicious Persecutions of one another ? To see Prisons filled, Houses rifled, multitudes of true Christians undone and hunted by one another : To see how ignorant the most zealous Christians are in many Places, and alas, even the Teachers of them ; and how contentious and prone to Sects and bitter Censures, and to justify unjustifiable things, and to make odious one another, and to speak evil of the things they understand not, and to be most confident unto rage, where they are most mistaken : To hear how confidently contrary sides appeal to God, and father all their Cause on him : How confidently and religiously they seem to die, who are executed for contrary Causes ? The pious words E. G. and Prayers of those in 1660. on one side, and the pious words and Prayers of the Jesuits and other Papists lately : To hear some swear

swear others guilty unto death, and the Jesuits Appeal to God that it was all false, and renounce all Equivocations and Absolutions at their death. Yea, to hear lately in this *Parish* at the Communion publickly while they received the Sacrament on it, one Man Swear or Vow before God those visible Actions of another, which that other, there and then, as solemnly vowed to be all false. To Read every week News books, whose studied work is with the greatest wit, and vehemency, and gross lies to draw Christians to hate and destroy each other: And while all cry up Love and Peace, for the same Men so to fight against it, worse than all their publick Enemies; so that there appeareth no hope of saving the Land; yea, the most upright Christians, from the lies, rage and malice of professed Christians. So that Men seem incarnate Devils.

And alas the few sincere Souls live below the holy joy which their Christian faith and hope bespeaketh, in too much fear and grief, or tenderneſs of the body. How can Patience endure to see all this.

The Case is doleful but. 1. Remember
M 3

member that all this doth but tell u what sin is , and what it hath done to Mankind, and yet Men will hardly believe that it is so bad.

2. All this may help you to believe that there is a Hell and Devils , that God is not to be accused of it, when sin it self is so much of misery and Hell.

3. All this doth most notably set forth the Excellency of Wisdom, Godliness and Justice , when the contraries are so odious: It is not Godliness, truth, or Justice, but the want of them in whole or part , which is the cause of all this evil. Do but think if all *England* or all the World, were but such as those few Humble , Holy , Charitable, Peaceable, Patient Christians , which you and I know , O what a quiet and blessed Land and World it would then be? I know the places where they live in so great Holyness, Love and Peace, that it is a great delight to live among them. Were all such as some of my beloved Friends, and daily Companions are, and have been, it would be such a resemblance of Heaven, as would leave no room for the sad complaint of this Objection. And by this we see what an Excellent thing true Faith

Faith and Godliness is in it self. And tho in the same persons there be the Remnants of Ignorance, Errour and sin which are a trouble to others and themselves, this is because that grace is yet imperfect, but its excellence appeareth in being contrary to sin, and so far subduing it, and keeping it as fire in the Chimney, from doing that mischief which reigning sin doth: And making Men so good and usefull, notwithstanding their remaining faults.

4. And in a life of tryal which prepareth us for the reward, it is no wonder if there be somewhat left for all grace to oppose, and exercise it self against? What War, what Victory is there, where there is no Enemy? And what Crown?

5. The Church is Christs Hospital, and is it a wonder that all are sore and sick? We are here under his cure: He hath done much already; more than all the World could do, in the work of true Regeneration and Sanctification: He hath broken the head of the Serpent, and the heart of sin: And it is dying daily more and more, and its not the imperfection that must cause us

to under-value so great a work.

6. Christ knoweth his own grace in all Believers, even the weakest, notwithstanding all their faults and follies; And he loveth his own, while he hateth their sin much more, than any Man can do: And he pardoneth their remaining infirmities, and loveth their persons, and calleth them his Brethren, and so must we: If Christ can pardon sin, and love the uprightness of the imperfect, we must imitate him.

7. As we must live in constant need of our Creator for our daily bread, or life and preservation, so must we live in daily need of the pardoning and healing grace of our Redeemer; as once Creating puts us not into a state of self-sufficiency and independance, so neither doth once Redeeming us. And the daily benefit of a Saviours pardon, and healing grace, is our daily comfort.

8. As *I* told you before about the imperfection of each ones grace, God will have a difference between Earth and Heaven, and what we want here, we shall there have in Perfection: Even greater Perfection than we can here believe.

9. The faults of all Christians teach

us

us all to think humbly of ourselves, and also not to overvalue imperfect Man, nor to trust the best too far; nor to take all for true or good, which they do or teach; But to walk cautelously with all Men, and to put our whole trust in God alone.

10. And the worse we all are, the more we discern the freeness of Gods Love and Grace, and the great cause of thankfulness that we have for all our mercies.

11. And when we see that the best on Earth are so imperfect, it should help us all to long for Heaven; where there is no ignorance or Errour, no sin, no malice, no proud censoriousness, no divisions, but God is joyfully praised by all, as with one Soul, one Mind, one Love, one Mouth.

12. In all ages and Countries where the Church hath been most degenerate, God hath had many that have maintained their integrity, and have not Consented to the Corruptions and contentions of the times, nor run into the guilt of the ambitious Clergy, or of unruly Hereticks; and a few such as are his jewels, are worth many of the Earthly drossy world.

13. And what wonder is it if nominal Christians that are real Hypocrites and wicked Men, be haters and Persecutors of the just, and the Plagues of [the World, and the chiefest instruments of the Devil on Earth. Certainly the false profession of Christianity is so far from making Men good, and saving them, that it sublimateth their wickedness, and maketh them the worst and most miserable of Men.

14. It somewhat tendeth to allay the fears of weak Christians, who think that their faults are inconsistent with sincerity, when they see that so many of all sorts are so faulty: They see what Gods mercy beareth with in all.

15. And it is no real cause of dishonour to Christianity: For no Enemy can find any fault in that: There is no sin against God or Man, which Christ hath not forbidden, and is not more against than the most righteous Man alive is, it is therefore utter impudence, to charge those faults of Men on Christ, which he forbideth and abhorreth: What would they have him do more to signifie his hatred of sin, than to Condemn it, and prepare Hell for all that live and die impeni-

penitent? and himself to die rather than it shall go unpunished, even in those that are forgiven; and to do so much as he hath done to destroy it.

16. And if the wicked will perish by the scandal which they take at Christians faults, their impudence maketh their damnation just. It were else easy for them to see a difference between the imperfections of a Saint, and the wickedness of a beastly or Malignant sinner? And they should rather Grieve, that if the faults of serious Believers are odious, their own reigning sin is much more so; And therefore this should hasten their repentance.

17. And O how desirable should the Common sin and ignorance and divisions in this World, make Christs appearing and glorious Kingdom to us, when the whole Church shall be presented spotless, and beautiful in holiness and love, and Christ will be glorified in his Saints, and admired in all Believers: The holy City of God, the *Jerusalem* above, hath nothing but perfect amiableness, concord love and Joy, where all are, tho *many*, yet *but one*.

CASE

CASE XVIII.

*Heavy Judgments on the Land, by Plagues,
Poverty, Fire and Wars.*

XVIII. **A** Nother tryal of our Patience is, *publick and common and heavy Chastisements of God, upon whole Cities, Countries, and Kingdoms; especially by Plagues, Famine, Fire and War?* 1. In 1665. How doleful was the Case of London? When an hundred thousand dyed in a short time; when Men were cast by heapes into pits for Burial, and when good and bad were swept away, and the living were hard put to it to bury the dead, and Husbands and Wives, and Parents and Children who were burying their friends, expected to be presently dead themselves; and when the Houses that were not used to Prayer, had Praying doors, [*God be merciful to us*] being written on them to notifie their Case: And when we were glad to fly into remote and solitary places, and were afraid to meet a Man lest he should infect us.

2. And how doleful was the very next years Case, where the Rich and Famous City

City of *London* was burnt? O what a sight were thole dreadful raging mounting Flames? How many thousand Houses were consumed in three daies, which pride had adorned with costly furniture, and where luxury had waited the Creatures of God? What Treasures that had been long in heaping up were there consumed? To see the Streets crowded with Men astonished, that lookt on all their wealth consumed, and could do nothing to save it from the flames, and others carrying out their goods, and some laying them in Vaults for safety, and some in Churches, and altogether there consumed: The Booksellers hoped that the Famous Structure and Vaults of *St. Pauls* Church might have saved their great Treasure of excellent Books, which yet did but increase the Churches ruin? Yea the Houses of the most just and Godly Men no more escaped than the rest, even where God was daily called on, and worshipped: No nor the Churches, where many Holy excellent Men had been famous fruitful Preachers, and where the bodies of thousands of true Saints had been Buried: About seventy Churches burnt down; when it was but about four years before that

that most or many of their faithful Pastors had been cast out and forbidden to preach the Gospel; and now those that were set up in their steads are driven out by the Flames, as they lately fled away from the Plague; and most of them to this day or very many, lye unbuilt, and Gods worship is performed in such poor wooden Tabernacles, as before would have been made a scorn. And how many thousand Families had no Habitation, and were reduced to Poverty, and to this day live in the distress which those Flames did bring upon them? And since then, how many dreadful Fires have consumed many Corporations in this Land? Near us, how Calamitous was that in *Southwark*, and but a Fortnight past, that more dreadful Fire at *Wapping*, where about a thousand houses that had above three thousand Families were burnt.

3. And though God hath not yet tryed us with any common destructive Famine, Poverty causeth thousands to dye of Sickneses taken by want; even by drinking Water, and wanting Fire and Cloaths, and eating unwholsome Food: And we have oft had notice of the
Case

Case of *Germany*, after the Wars, about 1627. when they were fain to watch the the Graves, lest the dead Bodies should be digged up and caten; and of the more miserable Case of *Rochel*, and others likewise.

4. But alas, bloody Wars have been more common, and Men to Men more terrible, than mad Dogs, or Wolves, or Tygers: We had sad experience of it in *England*, *Scotland*, and *Ireland*; but other Countries have felt much more: They that have not tryed it, know not what it is to live under the Power of savage Souldiers, who domineer over all, and make all Slaves to them in their own houses, and keep them under daily fear of Death, and take away all they have, and make no more to kill men, than to kill Dogs or Flies; and if they can but call them Enemies, think him the most honourable who killeth most. O what dismal sights were our fields, covered with the Dead, and Garrisons stormed, and all Countries filled with Men-hunters, who took their Neighbours Estates and Lives for their lawful prey: Besides, that one Party of them grew to that Inhumanity and Blasphemy,

as

as to make a Scorn of Death and Hell, and so to defie God; as that to this day the word [*God damn me*] continueth with them a Word of Course: And others that professed Piety, fell into pride and presumption, and contentious Sects, for which they usually raged and were confident. Is it not hard to think of such things with Patience? Much more to see and feel much of them.

But God hath not left us without Remedy. I. As to Plagues. 1. The great numbers that dye together, make us think otherwise of it than is meet: It is but Death, and all must dye: Not one more dyeth of the Plague, than would dye ere long if there were no Plague; and it is usually a shorter pain than other Feavers brings; and the pain is small in comparison of the Stone in the Bladder, and many other Diseases.

2. And the terror of mens danger and dying Multitudes, usually doth more to awaken men to Repentance and serious preparation, than other diseases use to do. Though Fear alone make not a sound Repentance, Fear is a great and necessary Preparatory. I have reason to hope, that the great Plague in London

was

was a help to the Conversion of many hundred Souls: Not only as it called men to review their Lives, and be- think them of their State; but as it made them far more impartial Hearers of publick Preaching and private Coun- sel: There was then in *London* no scor- ning at holy seriousness and diligence for Salvation, in comparison of what is now: The Houses that now roar out drunken songs and scorns at Godliness, and revile, threaten and curse the religi- ous sort, had other Language then, when [*Lord have mercy on us*] was written on the Doors: When the pub- lick Ministers fled, God stirred up the Charity of many silenced Ministers, who till then had forborn publick Prea- ching, and they ventured among them, and begged Mony out of the Country for the Poor; Visited them, and preached to them in the deserted Pulpits: And the sense of approaching Death so a- wakened both Preachers and Hearers, that multitudes of young men and o- thers were converted to true Repen- tance.

And this was the chief occasion of the publick preaching of the silenced Mini- sters

sters ever since : They had so great experience of Gods blessing, and their young Converts were so sensible of the benefit, that both Preachers and Hearers than resolved to hold on as long as they could.

And was not *London* now a Gainer by this Plague? Did it not make men better? Compare it and other places then: At *Oxford* the Parliament of Lords, Bishops and Commons, who fled thither from the Plague, even then in the heat of it were making that swearing Act, which ruineth and imprisoneth Non-conformists, that come within five Miles of any City, or Burges Corporation, and take not their Oath and Declaration; (yea, and some Lawyers say, Conformists too, that have but once preached in that which they call a Conventicle and take not the Oath) But in *London* there is no such work; they were not then sending the Preachers to Goal, or hunting them as Rogues or Rebels, but gladly hearing them, and begging for their Prayers.

II. And as to Famine or common Poverty, I have spoken of it before: The great distress that the Fires and other means have brought on many thousand Families, hath but drawn out the Cha-

rity

rity of others, and exercised the repentance, humility and mortification of the poor and so hath prepared both sorts, rich and poor, for a greater reward; It hath done much to try mens Charity, and to shew the difference between man and man: I that have had opportunity to try both sorts, have found by long experience, that whereas malignant worldly men were wont to say, that these Religious persons were but Hypocrites; though they read the Scripture and prayed much, they were as covetous and uncharitable as others; it is so much contrary, that they excel others in Charity as much as in Piety; and I can sooner get ten Pound or twenty for the Poor from religious Persons, than ten Shillings from those that speak against them, that are of greater wealth than they.

III. And though the foresaid Flames of *London, Southwark, Wapping, Northampton, &c.* were great Corrections, let us not make them greater than they are: As to the loss of Estate by them, it is but what the richest Merchant is liable to by Piracy or Shipwrak; and not so much as Death will shortly bring on all, when

when all the world must be forsaken. 2. And it was a great mercy of God, that mens lives were preserved when their wealth was gone; so that they had time to improve the Correction. 3. And a great help it was to men of any sense and consideration, to see the vanity of all worldly wealth and treasure, and to prepare for the time when it must be finally left: And the Flames of *London* and its after Ruins, were a notable fore-signification of the great Flames and Ruins of the final Judgment Day; and it loudly called on men to examin what the Corporation Common Sin of *England* is, which laid so many Coporations in Ashes; and to repent in time: And we need not make it an Aggravation that it was done by malice; for its easier to our Consciences, that it be done by others than our selves; and it helpeth those men to see the evil of those destructive Principles which engage men to do such mischief on pretence of the service of the Church. 4. Yea, and it is a presignification of the new Heaven and Earth, when all things shall be restored, to see such a City so soon rebuilt, in far greater splendor than before.

IV. But cruel Wars, and Souldiers, are a more sharp Calamity: But yet leave us alleviating considerations, and matter enough to exercise and help our patience. For 1. It doth lively tell us what man is in his corrupted state, and what Sin is, and what we had been if Grace had forsaken us. 2. It tells us what our state on Earth is; a militant life; and calls us to remember our spiritual Enemies and Warfare, and to live as arm'd in constant Watchfulness. 3. It helps our Faith to believe that there are Devils, and a Hell, when we see the Works and Instruments of Devils upon Earth, and see Earth made so like to Hell. 4. It teacheth us to set light by earthly Treasure, which Thieves and Plunderers can so quickly take away: And to live in constant preparation for Death, when men are so ready to take away our lives. 5. And it tells us how much we are beholden to God for our preservation, and for our peace, that all men be not thus continually as incarnate Devils to one another. 6. And it calls us to long for the World of perfect Love and Peace, where there are no such men, and no such doings. How
sweet

sweet will everlasting Peace and Joy be when we come newly out of such a World of savage Cruelty? 7. And God often by Wars, prepareth people for a better Peace than they had before; the sweetness of which doth make the misery of War forgotten. 8. And usually it is the most wicked men that are cut off by War, while the pious and peaceable look on and escape, Wicked men are mad with sin, and will not give peace to themselves or others: While they run with rage to murder others they are killed themselves, and God is known by the *Judgements* which he executeth, while the *Wicked* are ensnared in the work of their own hands, and dashed in pieces by their own rage; for the *Wicked* are like the raging Sea, which casts out dirt; there is no peace to the *Wicked* saith the Lord. Isa. 49. And while men bite and devour one another, they are devoured one of another; and they that lead into Captivity, shall be led into Captivity, and they that kill with the Sword, shall be killed by the Sword.

So that it should seem no strange thing to a Souldier of Christs, that the World which he is passing through is militant.

CASE XIX.

The Prosperity and Triumphs of wicked Enemies of the Church.

ANother great Tryal of our Patience is, the *Triumphs of the wicked Enemies of the Church*, and that the Saints are usually under their feet in sufferings and scorn: I spake before of *Persecution*, and as to the *Prosperity*, and *Triumphs of Malignants*; *David* who was under the like Temptation, hath long ago given us Considerations sufficient for our Patience. *Psal. 37. and 73.* And the triumph of the Wicked is but for a Moment, and their motion as the *Grasshoppers*, that fall as they rise: Their Victories, and Glory, and Rage, are like a Squib of Gunpowder, which makes a noise and is presently extinct: They are moved Dust, which the Wind of Gods displeasure blows into our Eyes: They are dying while they are raging, and their own Death is at hand and lingereth not, while they are killing others: Go into the Sanctuary and see their End, and it may silence all Impatience; for see their Corps in Rottenness and their Souls in Hell,
and

and pity will overcome envy , and their
 case will appear to you a thousand times
 sader than theirs that suffer by them for
 righteousness sake. Their contrivances
 do but Plot themselves into misery. All
 the blood which they shed , must be
 reckon'd for : And precious in the sight
 of the Lord is the death of his Saints,
 even when they seem deserted. Where
 now is *Alexander, Caesar, Tamberlain*, and
 such other Famous Murderers called Con-
 querours ? Are they now Triumphant ?
 Is it an ease to their tormented Souls,
 or life to their dust, that living fools do
 magnifie their names , and their dear
 bought Victories and Murders. If it be
 no glory to a Serpent , Crocodile, or a
 Wolf or a Mad Dog, to kill Men, no nor
 to the Devil who is a Murderer from the
 beginning, why should it be a Glory to
 these instruments of the Devil ? O what
 a dreadful search will it be to *Babylon* ,
 when in her shall be found the blood of
 the Saints and Martyrs of Jesus, and up-
 on her shall come at once all the right-
 teous blood that hath been shed ! The
 blood of the many hundred thousand
Waldenses , Albigenfes , Bohemians , &c.
 Did but render the Papacy more odious :
 Their

Their Inquisition and *Alva's* cruelties
 lost them the Low-Countries: They got
 nothing in *France* by the sudden Murder
 of thirty thousand or forty thousand Pro-
 testants; nor will they get at last by their
 present cruelties: The two hundred thou-
 sand Murdered by the *Irish*, prepared for
 the Murderers greater ruin, but did not
 satisfy their desires. Queen *Maries* fires
 did but make Popery the more easily and
 commonly hated and extirpated in the
 daeys of her Successour: Persecutors are
 not immortal, but must die as well as o-
 thers? And they have not alwayes the
 choice of their Successours: And as their
 names rot with their Carcasses, and to-
 pious, sober and wise posterity, no names
 are more odious, so their designs and
 works also often perish with them. We
 have seen in our dayes and Land, the
 same Men, that were the terrour of the
 Nation in War, laid in a grave and left
 to the Common Earth, where no one is
 afraid of them: And the same Men that
 were lift up by many Victories, and thought
 Kings Parliament, Ministers and People,
 must submit to their Will, as being in
 their power, within one or two years,
 were hanged drawn and quartered, and
 their Quarters hanged up over the Gates

of the City : Their Victorious Army being dissolved without one drop of blood-shed.

If we saw a drunken Man or a mad Man raging in the Streets, so that people were afraid to come near him, who would thiuk such a Man therefore ever the more happy? Or who would desire to be in his case? If we Judge of them by that part they are now acting on the Stage, under great Names and Garbs, we shall be deluded as they are? Look on them undrest, and off the Stage, see what they are under the pangs of death, or when the Soul is drag'd away to punishment, and hath left their ghastly faces and Carkasses for the grave, See what God saith of them in his word, and believe his Prognostick, what shall befall them. Is *Ahab* ever the better for being Recorded in Scripture, as an Enemy to faithful Prophets? Or *Cain* ever the better for being the first Murderer in the World? Or *Herod* ever the better for being mentioned in the Gospel; or *Pilate*, for having his name in the Creed: Or are the flames ever the easier to *Dives*, because he once fared sumptuously and was cloathed richly every day, while *Lazarus* lay at his Gate in Sores. The time is short: The Conqueror and the Con-

Conquered will be equal in the dust, where they will cease to trouble, and lie in peace; But the Persecuter and the Persecuted (for righteousness sake) will be as distantly separated as Hell from Heaven. The Men of this world, who have their Portion in this life, are Gods Sword and Rod to correct his Children; but as they now glory in their shame, so they shall shortly be ashamed of their glorying; and wish in vain, that all their proud oppressions and cruel Victories, had been not done, or could be undone.

CASE XX.

No probability in any visible means that ever the World should be much better. Twelve General Directions to get and use Patience in every Case.

XX. **A**ND it adds much to the tryal of our Faith and Patience, that *There is no apparent means of deliverance, nor probability, in the eye of reason, that ever the world should become better, but it groweth worse and worse: Could we see any hope of better daies, we might the easier wait in Patience.* 1. The Heathen World is out of our reach: We know not how to send any probable means a-

among them : The Roman Jesuits and Fryers, who have greater flocks of mony, have been encouraged by Kings, especially of *Portugal*, to go among some Heathens with their Embassadors, or by their help : And to their due praise be it spoken, in *Congo*, *Japan*, *China*, and some other Countreys, they tooke great pains and did much : But most that they did was quickly undone, partly by the prevy of sensual Heathens, and partly by their depravation of the Christian Doctrine which they should have Preacht. They consulting with carnal Wisdom, durst not tell Men long of Christs Crucifixion ; and they did but change their Heathenish Images, for *Agnus Dei's*, and Pictures of the Virgin *Mary*, and other Trinkets like their own ; which was easily received, but made not sound Christians, while the People thought that Christianity lay in such little things : And two things broke down all their paper building. In *Congo* they liked the Profession of Christianity, when it toucht not the flesh, and lay but in opinions, Names and Relicks ; but when they were told that they must leave Drunkenness, Whoredom and Royotous Sports, they cast off

all and would go no further. In *Japan* (and most places,) when they perceive that the design is Secular, to subject all Kingdoms to the Pope, the Princes abhor them, and cruelly persecuted the new made Christians, till they had utterly extirpated Christianity there.

The Protestant Princes and States are little regardful for the Conversion of Heathens, but contend about their own Dominions, interests and Wills, when they should confederate for the promoting of the Gospel of Salvation; Save that old Mr. *John Eliots*, and his helpers have by long unwearied labour done much intensively, but not much extensively in *New-England*. And how to carry it further they know not: Merchants that should contrive to make their factories serviceable hereto, take little care of it but prosecute the way of their own gain.

The most capable persons were Princes by their Embassadours; but who much, regards it? Or rather, the Neighbour Nations of Christians, who live near the Heathens and *Mahometans*, and traffick with them. But alas, these are mostly an ignorant sort of Christians, unfit to manage so great a work, such as the *Armenians*, *Georgians*, *Circassians*, *Mengrelians*,

Abassines, and most of the *Jacobites* and *Nestorians* ; or ignorant and vicious also, such as mostly are the *Greeks*, and *Moscovites* ; or contemned by those that Master them, such as are the *Transilvanians*, and *Hungarians*. So that they are a scandal to the *Turks* and Heathens, and bring Christianity with them into contempt.

And among Christians how small is the number of those that are sincerely godly, and keep sound Doctrine and live accordingly : And there appeareth no probability of Reforming them. The great and famous Eastern Churches are mostly gone already to *Mahometanism*. And the servitude of the *Greeks* keeps them in ignorance, and ignorance cherisheth all vice. The *Moscovites* have neither Bishops or Priests that can Preach or desire it, nor Emperours that will suffer it, but are ignorant slaves under the name of Christians. The Roman party are Armed with Wealth, Learning, Policy and Power to keep up the Papal claim and corruptions, and keep out that Reformation, which would restore Christianity to its Primitive purity. The Reformed in *France* are under heavy sufferings and near extirpation. The *Lutherans* too bitter Enemies to Concord, and most

Ger.

Germans too sensual in their lives: The Protestant Churches seem every where declining, if not hastening to ruin: Some Rulers that have professed Reformation are serving the Papists, with resolved violence to root it out, and bring themselves and subjects under a Forreign Jurisdiction. And *George Herberts* Prophecy seemeth to go on, that Religion is forsaking *Europe* and flying to *America*. *Sculdetus* in *Curriculo vite sue*, tells us that one time all seemed to go so strongly for Reformation in *Germany, Bohemia, France, England, &c.* That many said the Golden age was coming: And in one year all was changed and brought as low as formerly. And if we might judge by probabilities, all of Christianity saving a lifeless name, and shell and Ceremonies, is like to be rooted out of the Earth: And the Devil reigneth as powerfully by wicked Rulers, and Prelates, and Priests, called Christians, as by *Mahometans*: And Godlyness is as effectually destroyed in such a Kingdom as *Moscovy*, as it is in some Intidel Lands. And when Christ cometh, will he find faith on the Earth?

This Case is indeed a great tryal of our faith and patience, but let us consider,

1. That this World was never intended to be the place of our felicity or long abode, but only as is aforesaid, as the Womb where we are conceived and formed for a better World: Or as the Wilderness to the *Isralites* where they were to be tryed by difficulty in their way to the Land of promise; or as a Winter Journey tho dirty or craggy waies homeward. And what if this Womb, this Wilderness, these ways never amend? What Man is so weak as to be discouraged, because posterity is like to find the waies as fowl or rough as he hath done? Or because the deserts of *Lybia*, or *Arabia*, or the dangerous passages over the *Alps*, will be no better to the next Generation than they are to this? It is indeed the desire of every true Christian that the World were better; and these desires are not vain: They shew the honesty of them that wish it: But God will not do all that he hath made. It is our duty to desire: We must desire the Conversion and Salvation of many that never will be Converted and saved.

2. God will give us all that we desire, but it is not on Earth: If we did still see by faith the greater, perfect glorious World, which we are near, it would quiet

quiet ns against all our perplexing doubts and troubles in this World: All is well in Heaven, even better than we can desire; there is no Ignorance, no Infidelity, Atheism, Mahometanism, no Wars, no Sects, no Cruelties, no Contentions; Reformation is there perfect, and the Church all holy.

3. In all reason, our Affections should be but proportioned to their Objects: It is our duty to mourn for the miserable World, and the corrupt state of the Church on Earth: But seeing the Heavenly Glory incomparable, exceedeth the Worlds Misery; our joy should be far greater to think of Heaven, than our trouble when we think of Earth. Again I say, All the Earth is no bigger compared to Heaven, than our Goal is compared to all this Kingdom, yea, to all the Kingdoms on Earth; and it is our duty to be sorry, if those in Prison do not amend; and yet those must dye that are condemned: But should we not more rejoyce, if it went as well as we could wish it with all the rest of the Kingdom, or of the World: Heaven which is many thousand times bigger than Earth; hath nothing but perfect

felicity and glory, perfect knowledge, love and joy.

4. And this Earth shall serve to all Gods Ends: He will gather all his Chosen; and he will be glorified in his Providence towards the rest: Out of this *Bedlam*, Christ bringeth many to saving Wisdom; and out of this Goal Gods Mercy taketh many Sons to Glory; He reproveth all, and pardoneth all, that are penitent Belivers; and Traytors and Enemies are reconciled to him by Christ, and being justified by Faith, have peace with God: God placed man in an earthly Paradise, as the passage to the heavenly; and mans own wilful sin and folly, turned his Paradise into a Prison, and it is now a House of Correction, where God joyneth Instruction, and by the Book and Rod doth teach his Chosen saving Wisdom: And as the Israelites in the Wilderness had their suitable mercies for their forty years; and as *Jeremy* led the captive Jews to build, and plant, and marry in *Babylon*, and pray for its Peace, as the Place in which their own Peace must be had, till seventy years were past, (which is the age of man) so God here giveth us great mercies suitable

able to our Wilderness and Captive State; and when a little time is over, we shall have better than we could here believe. And though I would not cherish that sinful desire, which would have that on Earth which is proper to Heaven, nor have I skill enough in the exposition of hard Prophecies, to make a particular determination, about the thousand years Reign of Christ on Earth before the final Judgment; yet I may say, that I cannot confute what such Learned Men as *Mr. Mead*, *Dr. Twisse* and others (after the old Fathers) have hereof asserted: And I am certain, that Christ teacheth us all to pray that Gods Name may be hallowed, his Kingdom come and his Will be done, on Earth as it is in Heaven; and that he appointeth us to use no Prayer or means in vain: And many are ready to believe the old saying, that as the World was made in six days, and the seventh was made a day of holy rest, and a day with the Lord is as a thousand years; so after six thousand years of sin and sorrow, a thousand years holy rest shall follow: Of this I am uncertain; but I believe there will be a new Heaven and Earth, in which will dwell

dwell Righteousness. We must not
 look for too great matters in a sinful
 cursed Earth. We would fain have all
 the blessedness of Heaven, but we are
 loth to dye, and therefore would have it
 here on Earth; and the rather because
 as hear-say without sight doth not give a
 man a satisfactory conception of any
 house or place that he would know; so
 such a sensible conception we would have
 of Heaven: But death is the wages of sin,
 and dye we must, but the gift of God is
 eternal life, through Christ who hath
 overcome him that had the power of
 death, by the fear of which we are kept
 in bondage: And we may rejoyce by an
 implicate trust to Christ, in the hope of
 that Glory which we can in the flesh have
 no explicite *idea* or conception of; where
 will be no sin, no death, no fear, no im-
 perfection, no unbelief or censorious
 distaste at any of Gods words or works;
 but beautifying vision, and fulness of
 everlasting joy in glory.

And against this and other Objections,
 you must still remember that a suffering
 condition is not so bad for the Church on
 Earth, as unbelief and flesh would make
 you think. For

1. A fleshly prosperity is too bruitish and short to be true felicity : Its the portion of the wicked, and the occasion of their deceit and mine. *Psal. 17. 14. Luke 12. 15, 20, 21.* And is the Church less happy, because it is saved from so dangerous temptations?

2. Forget not the unvaluable riches of the Church, in its lowest state : Their God, their Christ, their Comforter, the promises, and all suitable providences fitted to their good, are a thousand fold greater riches and honour, than all the Kingdoms and power of the ungodly world.

3. The Church in its most depressed state, hath impregnable strength and safety : Their God is invincible : Their Saviour is the Rock which the Gates of Hell shall not prevail against. *Mat. 16. 18.*

4. When they are most scorned and contemned, and used as Fools and Rogues, and as the basest and most odious of mankind ; they are the Members of Christ, the Children of God, and bear his Image, and are the charge of Angels, and passing to a Crown of Glory. And what is any dishonour from man, as set against such honours with God, and all the Blessed?

Blessed

Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. Mat. 5. The reproach of Christ is greater riches than Worldlings treasure. Heb. 11. 26. Eph. 2. 7. and 5. 25, 27. and 1. 22. 23. and 3. 10.

5. Remember that the far greatest part of the Church, even all since the Creation, are in possession of Heaven already, and it is but a small remnant as the gleanings, that are here yet behind. *Heb. 12. 22, 23.* read the description of them there: Christ is not ashamed to call them Brethren. *Heb. 2. 11.* And useth them as such: In his Fathers House he hath many Mansions for them, *John 14. 1, 2, 3.* And if you saw all those Millions in Heaven with Christ, could you for shame grudge that the few behind are passing thither through temptation and tribulation? Or that it must be as by swimming, or on broken pieces of the Ship, that they must come all safe to Land, as *Acts 27.* If all be well in Heaven, grudge not at the way; These things are never the worse, or more uncertain in themselves, for being unseen.

6. And how great security hath God given the Church of all this heavenly glory promised? Can we fear that Christ will

will b
mans
new
instea
love.
do;
it, a
Sinn
be a
any
8
tory
wit
Ad
aff
bu
lea
L
it
in
a
e

will be defeated of the great design of mans Redemption, and reigning in the new *Jerusalem*, where he is to be its Light instead of the Sun? And doth not God love his Church much better than we do; and better know how to deal with it, and all the World? Shall we blind Sinners, who do nothing thoroughly well, be afraid lest God will miscarry, or do any thing amiss.

8. The Church must have its Purgatory on Earth; and Prosperity filleth it with Hypocrites who corrupt it; and Adversity must refine it from such dross.

9. Particular Christians are better by affliction; and what else is the Church but particular Christians: God will not leave our temptations to the damning Love of the World too strong.

10. The Church must be conformed to its Head, who suffered and then entered into glory.

11. While all Individuals are sinful and imperfect, what wonder if all the Church do suffer by it?

12. Most graces must shine and increase by exercise; like some Jewels that must be rub'd; as Fire in a Flint or Steel, that must be called into light by violence. We
are

are but like common men in appearance, till somewhat more than common work, or suffering call us out, and shew our difference from Hypocrites.

These and many such Considerations before intimated, may convince us that the worst state of the Church or World, is no just cause of censuring Gods Providence, nor of discouragement or impatience to any true Believer : But still in Patience we may possess our Souls.

I will draw out this Treatise no longer, but to remember all Christians, that the common great defect of Patience is a great dishonour to our profession of Faith and heavenly hope, and leadeth us to that within as the Cause which we should be greatly humbled for ; and that it is a disease so painful to our selves, as should make us loth to cherish or excuse it : A tender state of Body is not desirable, which can endure no Cold or Air, no Dyet but curiously drest, neither Winter nor Summer, &c. Much worse is a tender impatient mind, that is hardly pleased by Man or God ; that is impatient at every loss or cross, at every real or supposed wrong ; at every danger, threatening, or ill news ; that must be strok'd, and

and rock'd, and used as a Child. Alas, many people that truly fear God, have so great a want of patience, as that one can hardly live quietly with them; but he must have extraordinary skill, and care and tenderness, if not flattery, who will not be a trouble to them.

And yet because some causlessly judge these to be worse than they are, I will say again, that *Passion*, and the *Wills defection*, are very different sorts of Impatience.

I conclude with these few brief Directions, for establishing the heart with patience in all Tryals whatsoever.

I. Understand well the true nature of Patience and Impatience, that you mistake not natural Temper for either saving Grace, or damning Sin. The Passions must be distinguished from the Judgement and Will. A man of a choleric temper, and aged, sick or weak persons may be peevish, and impatient with the little provocations which daily befall them; so far as to be angry, and trouble themselves and others: Children will cry; and most Women are easilier cast into passion than Men; they are apt to fear beyond all reason, and to be troubled and troublesome to others with

with unquiet grief, displeasedness or anger : This must neither be made light of as no fault, nor yet made a greater fault than it is. Many men have stronger natures, and free from passion, (and some almost to stupidity) which joyned with Grace and a due sense of weighty things, is a great advantage and ornament : But its found oft in the most graceless wicked men, who deceive themselves by it, and think they are better than passionate honest men : Yea, it usually proveth a great hinderance to their Repentance and Reformation ; no Sermon, no Reason, no thought of Death or Eternity will move and change their senseless hearts.

But the saving Grace of Patience is principally in this, when a man hath so resolvedly given up himself to God by Christ for Life eternal, and is so much under Divine Authority, that he can endure the loss of all, even Reputation, Estate, Friends, Liberty or Life, rather than forsake Christ, or hazard his Salvation by wilful sin ; and therefore also striveth against all sinful passions, and repenteth of that which doth surprize him.

And damning Impatience is, when a man cannot deliberately bear the loss of

cor-

corpe
and
right
off,
tha
wor
Yok
ent
Hea
pat
gro
in
wo
us
Ea
be
ter
ca
on
ve
S
n
fl
y
d
f
n

corporal prosperity, for the sake of Christ and Righteousness, nor hold on in a holy, righteous, sober life; but will rather fall off, and wilfully sin, and venture his Soul, than deny his flesh, and be undone in the world; such take Godliness for a grievous Yoke, or else they would not be impatient to bear it, and they take not God and Heaven for their best.

II. Nothing therefore will make one patient in a holy saving sense, but the well grounded resolved choice of Gods Love in Christ, and the blessedness of another world, as that portion which must make us happy, what ever we lose or suffer on Earth: Therefore Faith and Hope must be above, and fetch from Heaven the matter of our constant resolution, or else there can be no true patience: If we live more on earthly hopes and comforts than heavenly, and more to the Flesh than to the Spirit; there can be no true patience, much less durable: For in the World we shall have troubles; and if we have not yet a content in the love of it, is more damnable than trouble,

III. Therefore the true contempt of fleshly prosperity and worldly things, by mortification, is absolutely necessary to
pati-

patience. While the body and its appetite, ease or life, is over dear to us; we shall never patiently lose or spare them; and while we love the flesh, and world, reputation, wealth and pleasure too much, we shall be overmuch troubled to lose them. Account all loss and dung for Christ, as *Paul* did, and you'll easily bear the loss of it.

IV. Think what you have as well as what you want; reckon up truly all the riches of Grace in Christ; to be a Child of God, beloved by him, an Heir of Heaven, a Member of Christ, pardoned, justified, sanctified, under Gods true promise of everlasting Joy; and compare this with your suffering, and think whether it becomes an Heir of Heaven to be impatient in the way.

V. Therefore be diligent to make your Calling and Election sure; neither neglect necessary obedience, nor cherish causeless doubts; lest you lose that comfort of hope which must make you patient in all tryals; else when Heaven and Gods Love should support you under all, you will be still questioning your title to it, and so have nothing to set against all your sufferings and tears. If this Anchor of Hope
be

be not well grounded, what shall uphold men in sufferings and death.

VI. Live in the constant belief and apprehension of Gods absolute dispose of all the world ; and see all things and persons as in his hand, and remember that there is nothing comes to pass without him, and that he useth even the permitted sins of men, to his good and holy ends. Think on no man, or action, or event as independent upon God ; but remember still with whom you have to do, and who it is that over-ruleth all, and whose Rod your Enemies and Afflictions are : And this will tell you that nothing is done amiss by him, and that nothing shall be finally hurtful to the Faithful ; and that we must not dare to accuse our Maker : And it will make you say, *It is the Lord ; Let him do as seemeth him good, The Will of the Lord be done.*

VII. Here see still the certain end of all : How the sufferings of the Faithful will end ; and how the power, wealth, prosperity, and triumph of the wicked will end : Go into the Sanctuary : Believe what God hath foretold you, and faith may fully satisfy you.

VIII. Keep a due humbling sense of your own and others sin, and of Gods common mercies to you and all men, that
you

you may still perceive how much better God dealeth with you than you deserve: Its no small mercy to be alive, out of Hell, and to have the free offers of a Saviour, of Pardon and Salvation, and to have God intreating you to be reconciled to him, and promise you Christ and Life, if you do but willingly accept his gift.

IX. Be acquainted with your chief temptations, both to impatience, and to other sin, that you may live in Arms and watchful resistance. 1. Renew not your own wounds and sufferings, by gross negligence or wilful sin, and yielding to the Tempter: For if you put God to use a sharper Rod, your patience will have a harder work: And do not by rashness make your own suffering, and run into it, (as by rash words, by surety-ship, and imprudent actions many do) you may more confidently look for Gods support under the cross which he layeth on you for tryal, than that which you make for yourselves; though there also Repentance may give us a comfortable Remedy.

2. And understand what are your temptations to impatience; Is it crosses, poverty, threatnings of men, a froward Companion, a wicked Child, or rather a weak and peevish passionate temper?

What

Whatever it is, get those particular considerations against it; which must be your Armour, and live in the daily use of them.

X. Resist the beginnings of unbelieving troubling thoughts, and role them not in your mind: Abhor the first degrees of distrusting God, or discontent with his providence, or any secret accusation of his disposals; and turn your thoughts presently to his love, and mercies, and promises, and Christs abundant grace; pore not upon troubling and discontented things any further than is necessary to avoid the evil; but study the satisfactory promises and terms of further grace and endless glory: Be careful (with distrust and trouble) for nothing, but in all wants and straits go to God, and open all to him, and ask him for your daily bread, remembering that *he clothed the Lillies of the field, and that a Sparrow moveth not without his providence, and that all the hairs of your head are numbred, and that he knoweth what you need, and what is best for you, and that sufficient to the day is the evil thereof*: Think what a mercy it is that he commands you, to cast all your care on God who careth for you: And whether if the King bid a Begar or Prisoner, *trust him, and cast all his care on him*, it would not comfort him.

XI. For-

XI. Forget not all the wonderful deliverances that you and the Church of God have had, and how oft his mercies have confuted and reprov'd your distrust.

XII. Lastly, thoroughly study a crucified Christ, and the reasons and use of the Cross, and why he will have us imitate him and follow him in sufferings to Glory ! And never think God disappointeth you, if he will but bring you safe to Heaven. And read oft the sufferings of Christ, and his Sermons, *Mat. 5. John 12. 14, 15, 16. and Mat. 6. Rom. 8. 1 Pet. 3, and 4. Jam. 4. and 5. Rev. 2, and 3. Rom. 5. 3, 4. Col. 1. 11. Heb. 6. 12. and 12. 1, &c. Ro. 12. 12. &c. 15. 4, 5. 1 Tim. 6. 11.* For you have need of patience, that after you have done the Will of God you may inherit the promise, *Heb. 10. 36.* Count it all joy when you fall into divers (trying) temptations, knowing that the trying of your faith (which is more precious than Gold which perisheth) worketh patience : But let patience have its perfect work. And shew that you are patient toward God by your patience toward men. *Now the God of Patience and Consolation grant you to be like minded one towards another according to Christ Jesus, Rom. 15. 5.* So prayeth, your Brother and Companion in Tribulation, and in the Kingdom and Patience of Jesus Christ. R. B.

F I N I S.

